

# THE GOAL OF SOCIAL WORK

Edited by  
**RICHARD C. CABOT**  
*Author of 'What Men Live By'*

A discussion by leading American authorities of the fundamental aims of social work.

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WORK?

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THE SOCIAL WORKER  
IN A  
HOSPITAL WARD

*By Elsie Wulhop*

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THIS human and helpful book is based on the work of the Social Service Department of the Massachusetts General Hospital and contains comments by Dr. Richard C. Cabot which are a vital and illuminating part of the text.

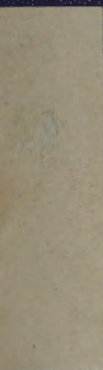
The author has taken thirty-seven typical case-histories from the records of the hospital. She gives first a brief tabulated statement of the medical and social data, followed by an informal narrative of the social worker's investigation and handling of the case.

The book is designed primarily for the use of social workers, but it will have a strong interest for the general reader as well, for the style avoids technicalities and the narrative which gives the story of each case is a vivid and gripping transcript of human life.

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## THE GOAL OF SOCIAL WORK





# THE GOAL OF SOCIAL WORK

*By Members of the  
Massachusetts Conference of Social Work  
Swampscott, 1925*

EDITED BY  
RICHARD C. CABOT

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## PREFACE

THE social workers of Massachusetts are accustomed to meet once a year to discuss their common interests. In preparation for the meeting of October, 1925, the president of the conference (who is also the editor of this volume) sent to the members a circular, most of which is here reproduced:

We propose for this conference the topic: 'What is the goal of Social Work?'

What is our philosophy of social work? What do we desire to achieve? What would our success be like if we achieved it? What is our gospel? What do we hope to give and to receive? Doctors seek health, policemen seek order, manufacturers aim to supply the world's material needs. But what do social workers aim at?

It might be said that we need no discussion of this topic because we all know the answer. 'Social Welfare' is what we want to achieve in our various fields of Child Welfare, Family Welfare, Public Welfare, etc. But do we all know what this means and do we all agree about it? Have we thought out and felt out our programme, its ends as well as its means?

In the conference programmes of the last ten years, 164 speakers out of 165 have dealt, not with our ends, but with the *means* to our ends (which

every one was assumed to understand and to agree on), such as: institutional care, placing out, psychiatric examinations, vocational guidance, habit clinics, the use of volunteers, mental hygiene, legal aid, the confidential exchange, financial federations, family budgets, etc. Only one speaker (Homer Folks) dealt with the objects for which all this apparatus and technique are marshaled.

To devote our attention exclusively to the means and to ignore the ends of our work seems like packing our trunks, hiring our taxi, and going to the station without deciding where we want to go. We want 'good care' for children; but is there only one kind of care that is thought good for them? We want family welfare. Are there no differences in the family ideals of different races, different epochs, different parts of the country, different religions?

We all agree, probably, that to our newcoming immigrants and to children, those newcomers upon earth, we want to pass on the best fruits of our civilization, the best traditions of American life — not all the modern ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving, but the best of them. But have we really thought out which we consider the best of many traditions, ideals, habits, standards, that are jumbled up in the life around us? Yes, and jumbled up often within our heads and in our behavior? We cannot escape this problem. Even now we are passing along in our social work certain standards, hygienic, ethical, economic, industrial, social. But we shun the labor



of thinking them out. The time has come to talk fundamentals.

We have asked each speaker to be concrete, to convey his meaning by examples rather than by generalizations, so that we may get before us some memorable instances of the sort of result which each speaker thinks we should strive for in social work.

The sessions of the conference will deal with the goal of social work so far as concerns:

1. Children and those who influence them.
2. Adults and their major concerns.
3. The aged and those responsible for them.
4. The preparation for social work.

This program was carried out and the results are here reproduced. The editor has made minor changes in wording whenever the change from speaking to writing seemed to demand it, or occasionally to restore what the speaker actually said, but did not remember afterwards to write out.

On the whole it seems to me that the question asked in the beginning has been answered with substantial unanimity, and that the answers are illuminating and valuable.

RICHARD C. CABOT



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RICHARD C. CABOT, PRESIDENT

# THE GOAL OF SOCIAL WORK



## PART I

### THE GOAL OF SOCIAL WORK FOR CHILDREN





# THE GOAL OF SOCIAL WORK

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## THE ENFRANCHISEMENT OF PERSONALITY

BY EDITH M. H. BAYLOR

*Children's Aid Society, Boston*

WE are trying to think of the goal in social work, and although we at first feel confident that we know our objectives we find ourselves checked quickly when we attempt to put our thoughts into words. Perhaps we say that happiness is the end that we desire for our children. But what is happiness? President Lowell, a few months ago, said that 'what we crave above all is a life worth living.' Certainly that is true, but is not the statement too general to express what we have in mind? I groped for some time in an effort to embody in words the idea that we wish to help children to grasp the fundamental values, to develop habits of flexibility which will enable them to adjust strongly to their environment, and to control their lives, the end being that they *will* find life worth living. Then unexpectedly I read this sentence:

'The end of it all is the production of a free personality, who will be able to enter for himself and

## 4 THE GOAL OF SOCIAL WORK

intelligently into all the relations of life.' A free personality!

### I. THE SHACKLES THAT BIND OUR CHILDREN

I think with many misgivings of the distance that lies between the children who come to us and real freedom of any sort. They have often made wild dashes to attain the only freedom of which they can conceive — no necessity for school, or work, or home demands; no submission to authority. They imagine themselves free when with the 'gang.' But there they are tied by the opinions of their fellows and by the rules of the game as they play it. Often they are handicapped physically, and almost always they are bound by memories carried with them from early childhood, by inhibitions, fears, habits. They may feel oppressed by some doubt about their parentage. They are not quite sure who they are; some child has told them that they were adopted and their minds are full of vague imaginings.

Recently I was talking with three elderly people, a man and two women, who had led singularly happy and successful lives. The subject of adoptions came up and the fact that so many children at some time in their lives believe themselves to have been adopted. The man laughed at the idea and was surprised to have his wife say that she had gone through just such a period. The other elderly woman had actually been an adopted child and had suffered intensely when suspecting this and still in ignorance of

the facts. I myself admitted having had, for no explainable reason, the same idea. Three out of four seemed a large proportion.

Possibly a child has been disciplined and feels abused, believing that he is being discriminated against. He feels different from the others. This depression, where there is no foundation for it, will be short-lived. But the child who knows that he is 'different,' who looks about him and sees others with parents and homes, while he is shifted from place to place at the mercy of charitable agencies, is bound to suffer intensely. It is small wonder that he often conceives a grudge against society and acts accordingly. We really do not know what he feels. I am inclined to believe that even the children who seem quiet and unruffled when placed and re-placed, have more acute feelings than we realize. Like the little girl who, when she returned home from a visit, told her mother that she had been very bad. The mother, who had received excellent reports, was very much surprised. 'I cried every night at dinner,' the child went on. The mother looked still more astonished. 'But no one knew it,' said the child; 'I was crying inside.'

One summer I went with a group of children to a summer camp. There were two mothers with their families and also several little fellows who had been included in the party. As I sat on the porch watching the camp preparations, a small boy of five stood before me, his hands in his pockets. He eyed me



intently. I waited. Presently he said, '*I have a father, and a mother, and a brother.*' After I had shown proper interest he ran away to play. His story came back to my mind and the fact that he had been taken away from his home because it was such a bad one. He undoubtedly remembered this too, and because the better family background of the other children in camp was so much in evidence, he felt different and separated. His defense was to register the fact that in reality, he *was* like the others in that he *had* a family.

An overgrown girl of fourteen said, 'Oh, I wish you could find some one who would be willing to adopt me! I know that I'm big and awkward, but I should love to have people to whom I belong.'

In speaking of this desire of a child to have some one who belongs to him, I am going to tell you a story that is extreme. But the fact that it happened even once is significant. Anna was sixteen at the time of this incident, and had been in the care of a charitable agency since infancy. The big record book, common at that time, gave only her name, the date, the name of the person who brought her to the institution, and the place of residence. She was well taken care of and grew to be an intelligent, sweet-looking girl, fair and attractive. But her visitor, who had known her for a number of years, found that she was growing moody and repressed and divined that she was dwelling constantly upon the fact that she knew nothing about her parents. Determined to

help her, the visitor followed the faint clue to Anna's parentage along its many windings to a tragic conclusion. The girl's mother was a negro, who was living with her colored children in Boston. The visitor was in despair, for her new knowledge only made matters worse and drove her into a quandary. Should she tell Anna or not?

The question was discussed and the conclusion finally reached that the girl must be told. Screwing up her courage, the visitor related, as gently and considerately as possible, the whole sad story. She watched Anna intently, expecting an hysterical outburst, but what was her amazement to see Anna's face glowing with excitement and joy. Her first words were illuminating: 'Thank God, I've got own folks.'

In the minds of all these children there is a feeling of instability; there is nothing solid under their feet. Since in its conclusions Society appears to have left them outside, they come to think themselves outlaws. Small wonder that they proceed to play the part. Realizing what is going on in many a child's mind, our task is to help him to become conscious of his own individuality and to realize that the thrill of living comes only when he has developed the ability to make his own entrance into the stream of life, instead of allowing himself to be dragged in.

There comes to my mind a girl, who, for a long period of years, suffered and rebelled. She remembered only too well her mother from whom she had

been taken by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. She was a small girl at the time, but she knew quite well what sort of house her mother's had been, and often in the night when she thought of it she cried for hours or walked up and down the floor wringing her hands. During one period she lived a dream life whenever she went to bed, picturing herself as a traveler going from one interesting place to another. All this time her foster mother knew nothing of Marion's method of 'compensation' and wondered why she grew thin and white.

The agency decided that she should be given every possible educational opportunity so that by achieving success herself she could achieve a feeling of stability and make, as it were, a new background for herself. The day when she received her college degree she said, 'For the first time in my life I am happy.' With the diploma actually in her hands she held an 'outward and visible' sign that at last Society looked upon her as a person of value. In the end she was free from her fears and repressions and took her place in the world.

## II. SHACKLES WHICH SOCIAL AGENCIES MAY FAIL TO REMOVE

But, although these children were all seeking freedom in one way or another, it did not consist, as they supposed, in release from control. They really desired a foundation, something to tie to. Surely the



responsibility of the social agency is to supply this need to the end that the child may be free. I wish to give two instances illustrating the way in which an agency may lose sight of its goal and leave the child farther removed than ever from freedom.

A boy of ten was taken from a bad home and put in the care of a private child-placing society. He was of the unstable type, easily led, and needed firm, steady handling. An excellent foster home was found for him on a farm. He was happy there and did fairly well. His deserting father was found and forced to contribute to his support. Things went pretty well for two years, when the father finally disappeared. After every effort had been made to find him, the Society decided that as George was a boy for whom board would have to be paid for several years, he was properly a public charge. Application was made, but the public agency refused the case, advising that the boy be returned to his own home, which was (they believed) so bad that the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children would soon find George 'neglected' and would then refer him to the public agency *through the courts*. The private society was loath to follow this suggestion, but finally decided to do so, and George was returned to his home. The S.P.C.C. went to work promptly, but was unable to find court evidence of neglect, although there was plenty of evidence of *past* trouble, for the mother and sister, who were living together, each had an illegitimate

baby, and the sister had also an older illegitimate child who was feeble-minded.

So matters dragged on, the private agency keeping 'supervision,' which amounted to nothing because the control had been shifted. Then, too late, guardianship was obtained. By this time George had fallen back into the shiftless life of his family, and every effort to improve his condition failed. He is now in the Shirley Reform School. Of course he might never have become a good citizen under any circumstances, but there was a fair chance of it, and I believe that the private agency was morally responsible for his welfare. It is true, however, that at Shirley he may be given the only sort of care that would ever have succeeded.

Another boy had been under the supervision of a charitable society for several years. He had a sad history with which he was familiar. He had been placed out and was fairly contented in his foster home. Then it was decided that he should become a public ward — a perfectly justifiable decision, which would have been harmless if reached while he was younger. But the boy felt the stigma of being supported by the public. He ran away repeatedly from excellent homes, and after many vicissitudes was returned to the first agency. He was a fine-looking, attractive boy, and decidedly intellectual. At last a home was found that was to be his forever. His foster mother made him her heir, and he received all the love and interest that he seemed al-

ways to have craved. He stood high in his class in school and was received socially in the most desirable homes in the community. But he was sad and depressed. His foster mother discovered that he was brooding over the fact that he had been made a public charge. One day he disappeared and more than a year elapsed before he was discovered in the navy. The pressure had been too great and he had run away, failing to realize that his trouble went with him.

At the moment when he was given up by the private agency he felt that he had been disinherited. Up to this time he had been living his life with a feeling of security. Then suddenly it was revealed to him that there was no security, only a veneer, called 'permanency,' which could be broken through at any time. Surmounting his early handicap, this boy had created certain loyalties in his life and from these he was dislodged. According to his values, he found himself betrayed.

These are unusual instances and the charitable agency which was responsible could introduce arguments to uphold its decisions. Here, however, we are not concerned with them. We are thinking only of the child and of the ultimate result. When we hear that 'satisfactory' results have been reached in the care of a child, we wonder *to whom they are satisfactory*. If they are not in the end satisfactory to the child, we are not living up to our responsibilities. It is conceivable that in certain instances

the few must be sacrificed to the many, but when a child has become a member of our family, so to speak, we stand in the position of parents — enlightened parents.

This is not intended as a criticism of charitable agencies, for I know how far they go in their efforts to hold on to the child. But we must consider the child's side of the question when we speak of results. So much of our lives as social workers is taken up with consideration of means, and in truth with questions of expediency, that it is a relief to forget them for a few days.

The thesis with which I started was that we want to help our unfortunate children to become free personalities so that they may enter the normal relations of life. But is this possible? Deprived as they have been, can they know what these relations are? In 'The Constant Nymph' a child says: 'But children, you know, are forced to be somebody's guest, if they have no home of their own. It's part of the undignified state of being a child.'

This need not be so. In good foster homes the foster parents are doing better than making the child feel himself a guest; they are teaching him how in the end to enter into the essential relations of life. They take him into the warm atmosphere of the home and allow him to become part of it so that he may experience for himself the thrill of belonging to some one, and the give-and-take of family life. In

the end he is fitted to make his way and to make a home for himself, a free personality.

### III. ENFRANCHISEMENT BY FOSTER MOTHERS

The foster parents teach us social workers one lesson after another. I have often thought of Mrs. Brown, whose home was full of men and boys, for there were Mr. Brown, two sons in college, and a younger boy in trade school. Still there was room for another. Mrs. Brown was an attractive woman with a glowing personality. She said to me one day: 'We are individualists in this home. By this I mean that each one is allowed to work out his own plans and ideas, to have his own room and his belongings arranged as he sees fit. In other words, he is allowed to be himself as long as he does not infringe on the rights of other members of the family. Each one is encouraged to talk about his interests and all the others give him their attention. At the table we make a point of conversing about subjects of general interest and not engaging in idle talk, criticism, gossip, etc.' She went on to give examples to show how her boys had developed into well-poised young men, how many original ideas they had carried into effect, and at the same time how strong the family tie had remained. At no time did she take the credit of the plan to herself — it was entirely a family arrangement.

Later when we placed a boy with her we found that the picture had not been painted too bright.



He was a boy who had been extremely troublesome over a period of years. Although showing some improvement he was still not an addition to any home. Also he was a boy who talked too much about little or nothing. But the way in which he responded to the new atmosphere was astonishing. He came upon a discarded magic-lantern and suddenly had the desire to make a moving-picture machine of it. The whole family was enthusiastic and helpful with suggestions. John got the additional parts required and was presently able to give a creditable performance. Then some one proposed that he should give a show, asking in the neighbors. John was overjoyed and thoroughly taken up with the plan. After a few months in this developing atmosphere his bad habits dropped away and he began to be like other people.

Mrs. Brown had the art of making all the members of her family free in the true sense, allowing them full rein to build up their own personalities, while at the same time she encouraged them to cooperate with one another. No child could be in her home for any length of time without learning how best to enter into the relations of life for himself, and intelligently.

Another foster home made as great a contribution. Miss Williams was a school teacher in a suburban town; she lived with her mother in an old home delightfully and quietly furnished. The atmosphere was one of refinement and dignified repose. Miss

Williams had found a girl who seemed to need her help, and had taken her into the family, where she fitted in like a daughter. By a happy coincidence a charitable agency discovered Miss Williams and asked her to take a forlorn girl who had come from a terrible home where she had been so abused that the S.P.C.C. had been able to remove her as 'neglected.' The child was half ill, dazed, and homeless. Her mind was teeming with horrible memories and pictures, and a whole new set of values had to be given to her. Little by little in the peace and warmth of Miss Williams's home, where mother and daughter made the girl feel that she belonged to them, she lost the frightened look and feeling, and was ready to go on with her education. A commercial school seemed wise for her, and in the course of time she graduated and obtained a good position. Miss Williams now had two daughters who were fond of each other and entirely happy. At last a third homeless girl went to her. She was intelligent and refined, with a desire to finish her training in a secretarial school. With positive genius Miss Williams fitted her in and made of this detached group a family in the true sense. The old lady was 'Grandma' to them all.

For a number of years a more peaceful, happy home could not have been found. The first girl married a desirable young man, who was at once taken into the family, although the young people lived by themselves near by. Then Miss Williams

was taken ill with a disease which progressed slowly to the inevitable end. Her small savings were soon exhausted and she would have faced serious embarrassment had not her three girls stood by her. The two who were still with her turned in their entire earnings, and the husband of the third contributed regularly what his wife considered her share. When Miss Williams finally died, they saw that all the expense was taken care of and assumed the expense of looking after her elderly mother who had now become a semi-invalid. In fact the young married couple gave up their apartment and combined with the others the better to carry on. And so they looked after the old lady to the last. The girl with the tragic background is now married and in a home of her own, while the other is making good in her chosen work.

I think that Miss Williams was one of the most successful people I have ever known, for she was able to help these three girls first to recognize and understand the deep fundamental values in life, and then actually to live up to them. The complete independence of each girl was maintained, yet she felt herself part of the harmonious whole and enjoyed the sense of responsibility which this brought her.

#### IV. THE CASE-WORKER'S PART

I conceive that the business of the child-placing agency is to contribute a foundation on which the child may build this life of freedom for himself, while

the foster parents help him to enter intelligently into the essential relations of life.

What then of the case-worker?

I conceive her as the one who, with her objective clearly in mind, weaves together the strands — the child, his parents and friends, and the foster parents. To accomplish this she must know thoroughly all the individuals involved; more than that she must in some way relate herself closely to them. Not only must she know them, but *they must also know her*. Only time will make this possible. For this reason she will do well to plan to devote to the work of one agency several years at least.

Children do not give their intimate confidences very readily; usually they will be confidential only after a feeling of trust has been built up. One boy said, 'My new visitor may be all right, but I shall never tell him the things I have told you.' With the inevitable changes that weave themselves around the child the worker is often the only one who can furnish the essential continuity and so prevent the child's life from loosening into a disastrous succession of separate episodes. The child must have some one to tie to. The foster mother also should feel that the worker who comes into her home is a tried friend. Then only is close coöperation possible.

If we study the social work of the whole country, Massachusetts workers stand out as people who give long service, in most fields. Elsewhere the rapid shifting of workers is alarming. Of course there must

be changes and promotions and there are plenty of excellent reasons to account for them; for instance, low salaries. But I believe that no one is justified in going into work with children solely to obtain experience. Incidentally she fails in her purpose if she does this, for she, too, must spend years in the devoted care of one group of children if she is to see far and to think deeply about this complicated manipulation of lives.

#### V. THE CASE-WORKER'S OWN LIFE

Moreover, because she is herself a part of the process and not an onlooker, the desired end, the goal of social work, cannot be reached unless she treats herself with the same consideration that she is giving the children, the foster parents, and all the other persons concerned. She should be as generous to herself as to the others in order that she may preserve the mental and spiritual balance without which the finest results may not be obtained. When we allow ourselves to become completely exhausted, we cannot give our best. We fail in our most delicate and important tasks, such as *interpreting one person to another*, which requires the insight and perception of a mind that is functioning to the full — a rested mind.

The case-worker is continually giving out feelings, thoughts, results of experience, and subtle elements that we cannot name. Also she becomes, through her work, so highly sensitized to person-



alities and situations that she sees more and feels more than the average person in other occupations. Unless she reckons with the process of *depletion* that is going on in her and consciously makes some provision for renewing her strength, physical, mental, and spiritual, she is likely to give out.

Who can say how this renewing is best done? It may be through art, literature, music, religion, family, or friends. It matters little so long as it is the particular source of strength needed for her, so that she will be able to make the contribution that will count, to give her best rather than her utmost.

There is one more point that I wish to make, though I find it a difficult one to put into words: Children have an extraordinary ability to perceive weakness in a worker's argument if it has been built up 'intellectually' with no basis of personal experience back of it. They know when we are advising them to take a certain course of action that we have never carried out in essentials ourselves. There are, obviously, some courses of action which we advise, but neither follow nor intend to follow ourselves. They are not in our field, so to speak. Can we in some way make the child understand that nevertheless we do take our own medicine and carry out in our own lives the fundamentals, the principles which we urge on him; that each one of us is herself striving to reach the same goal which is for him the high mark, so that he may live up to his highest potentiality? It is not easy to convey this

thought to a child, but still I believe that it is possible.

In spite of the difference between our lives and those of the children we work with, there must be a certain *squaring of our own lives to theirs*, a practice of what we preach, if we are to have any peace of mind and to escape conflicts in ourselves and difficulties of adjustment. I admire and respect, more than I can say, the field worker. She is the one who carries the heaviest load. It is for that very reason that I desire to have her think of herself. It is only by being free herself that she can help her children to find true freedom.

## OUR QUEST, OR WHAT ARE WE PLANNING FOR?

BY HANS WEISS

*Probation Officer, Boston Juvenile Court*

IT is a daring adventure to shape in clear forms and thoughts what to most of us are but dim outlines veiled by the blue mists of a hazy morning. Have we the courage, in a bold mood, to tear those comforting veils? Or are we better off if we don't? We came to this conference with the sincere will to help each other toward more light in our work. What are we striving for? What are our goals in our daily toil, and in a bigger way, what are we trying to give not only to our clients but to humanity? What is it we wish to see grow when we think of a social organism like the neighborhood, the community, the state, the nation, and the world as a family of nations?

To approach this subject one should first make clear where he stands. If one's work is an integral part of one's own philosophy, and not merely a chance job into which one has drifted by some obscure act of fate or of accident, — this philosophy will shape his professional goals and ideals.

### I

Life is subject to innumerable influences — only partly conscious in us. It is an ever-changing pro-

cess of creation and destruction. The process of creating is itself destruction because the old must give way to the new that is growing into existence. But there are some permanent principles, some guiding lines which great spirits have had the divine grace to put forth as truth. One of the principles — of basic importance for our own social philosophy — concerns the relation between me and other beings. I believe that Christ in his life and teaching gave this relationship the simplest and most beautiful expression. The idea of brotherly love, a true, friendly, and neighborly relationship between me and the one I meet — especially the one who calls for my help — is the core of our creed. Without it man sees only conflicts. In this idea originated the divine rights of man, the bedrock beneath the constitutions of modern democracies. Seven hundred years ago, my Swiss forefathers were moved by it when (fearing no sacrifice or peril) they laid the foundation of my country. The same idea gave strength and faith to the Pilgrim Fathers who built up the first humble but closely united communities in this country. It was one of the fundamental principles of Abraham Lincoln who fought for the cause of the negro.

I firmly believe that love, expressing itself in socially constructive ways, is the strengthening, creative force of the elemental social phenomena — of the family, of the neighborhood, and of the truly democratic community. And — between individ-

uals — love in the sense of the Greek Eros, a desire for the unfolding and fulfillment of one another — this kind of love is the one constructive relation between me and you. It creates true friendship and comradeship — the relation of mutual help and assistance, of common interests and joint efforts; it guides us toward common goals.

People may shrug their shoulders, call this 'sentimental truck.' They prefer to talk of 'science' and of 'business.' Others will say that brotherly love is a maxim of life for everybody — not just for social workers. Others believe that to found social work on so broad a principle as this makes things obscure. And some conscientious workers will insist that they cannot love everybody.

It is true that under the guise of love — love superficially considered, sentimentally misunderstood — more sins have been committed and more harm has been done than under any other high-sounding pretense. But has this anything to do with the truth itself? I do not think so. It is equally true that it is a thoroughly good maxim for everybody — but especially so, I claim, for us social workers, because we cannot work without it. The over-conscientious worker forgets that by love I do not mean here what the 'Saturday Evening Post' might mean. I am speaking of love as the metaphysic basis which enables us to see in our client a human being at all times, which enables us to understand him, to have faith in him which guides us to care for



his growth, which creates a bond resulting in mutual coöperation for his development and mine.

For me, love in this meaning is the fundamental principle of all our work. Why? Because it prepares us to understand our calling and to follow it with serene joy. It draws us closer to the other being; we begin to see beyond our own narrow limits and — gradually — we grow beyond them. Like the rays of the sun breaking through silvery clouds, glimpses of a fuller life throw their light on our path. Suddenly we realize that serving one who needs help is the most beautiful investment of whatever ability has been given to us. If we have artistic sense enough to love creative human relationships, we respond to this calling and are joined to those who before us have given their lives to this service.

Once for all, this principle determines our attitude in our work. The artificial walls, the family prejudices, the senseless taboos, the age-long misunderstandings, break down. We see the other being simply and clearly — as one entitled to the same right of happiness as we; given, as we, to joy and to suffering, only perhaps with a far greater capacity for suffering than we. The illegitimate child is nothing else but a tiny lovely creature sacred to growth. The delinquent boy and girl are children, who, deprived of proper bringing-up or handicapped by conflicts and unhappy conditions, need more thought, understanding, and patience than a child who has been more fortunate. We cease to consider

the unmarried mother and the negro as such; they are no longer 'cases'; poor creatures overwhelmed by a cold, scientific investigation or experimented upon by our 'plan of treatment.' What heartless inquisitors we often are, I realized recently, in the home of one of my colored boys. The father, a good-natured wise old negro, said, speaking of social workers: 'What is it all about — them social workers? I have been stricken with sickness. That was bad enough — I could not support my family. But it turned worse when the social workers started to come round. There they sit before you cross-legged, with a block and a sharp pencil — and, believe me, they do not stop asking you questions before they get back to Adam and Eve.'

Social workers, guided by this principle of brotherly love, will not hide a three-year-old child from her father who is brought up from jail for the hearing and longs to see little Mary. When a boy needs to be placed, they will not let their decision turn on the question of the parents' ability to pay or consent only if the mother will carry through a prosecution of the father for support.

Love as a basic principle determines the worker's attitude in other respects. I cannot neglect a boy entrusted to my supervision if I love him. That this has nothing to do with sentimentality is clear. For I cannot be sentimentally lenient with him, because I know and cannot forget consequences. The only possible attitude on this basis is that of a calm,

patient leader who teaches him to come up to the mark. For, if I love him, I must see — not just his actions as they appear — but what is back of them. Thus this principle leads up to a full realization of my responsibility, which is twofold: *to understand and to lead*.

And what a marvelous coincidence! The same principle which leads us to discard prejudices and to realize our responsibility opens the channel toward better understanding and prepares the way for confidence and faith — *provided* that we do not appeal to fear or to force, the two great dangers which above all threaten to spoil our work with delinquents. But, if one is really loyal to his basic idea, he will more and more refrain from using repression. He will strive to start in his relationship a free flow of giving and taking — and he will find that in many instances the boy is capable of giving more than the worker.

It has often been said that the proper attitude for us is that of a scientist. Quite true, if the scientific social worker is filled with the warmth of this love and with those high spiritual ideals which we find in a scientist like Dr. Michael Pupin. He searched for the 'eternal truth' of the laws of physics with the devotion of one who is a servant, with the faith of a metaphysician and the imagination of a poet. We must not forget that the eye of love may still discover a possibility there where the eye of knowledge cannot reach. We need both, but the first is the absolute prerequisite to the other.

Thus, I believe that our first goal in social work is to realize this principle and to develop ourselves so that it may in truth become our working philosophy, shaping our attitude and our actions.

## II

Through love, then, we are to understand and to lead human beings.

This involves a second set of goals. In our search for a deeper understanding of human nature, its structure and working, we discover that we need knowledge and wisdom. It has long been recognized that conscientious and systematic effort alone does enable us to give the service which our problems call for. And here we appeal to psychology.

Looking back on the development of social work during the past fifty years, we see how its different periods gradually lead toward the development and application of psychological methods. The modern social worker has outgrown the haphazard era of 'charity' with its kind heart, and its chaotic though well intentioned efforts; but often he still reverts to the self-righteous attitude of the blessed giver. In our work we have come to systematic case study and to a plan of treatment based on it. We believe that we owe it to our client as well as to our profession to analyze his background in search of the causes which have brought him where he is and to develop some constructive way out of the conflict which handicaps our client. The last decade and especially

the last few years have brought us intensive and splendid case studies, such as those of the Judge Baker Foundation and of the Child Guidance Clinics. Psychology and psychiatry have thrown much light on the make-up of personalities, on the processes of growth, and on the destructive influences of hidden conflicts. To me the greatest asset of this development is that the delinquent child is coming, at last, into his rights as a human being. I long for the day which shall take the branding mark from these boys and girls. I cannot emphasize strongly enough my conviction that as long as we treat these children merely as delinquents, we shall not be able to give them the chance which they need to make good and which society needs to obtain good citizenship.

While we need still more clarity and far deeper wisdom in character study and in our treatment, we must realize also a very real danger in this method of approach. Who hasn't met that type of cold-hearted case-worker who handles most marvelously the technique of investigation and yet completely misunderstands life? There is no joy and no serenity in the service of this worker. He is a machine and tries to make others alike. And, moreover, one cannot rely on his 'facts.'

Thus, our *first task* is to acquire our technical, our psychologic equipment. But let us fill it with the warm blood of life — let us stay close to the rhythmic pulse of the ever beautiful stream of life.



Our *second task* is to help toward a further development of our working methods. Each one of us ought to do his share wherever we meet to discuss problems for more clarity and enlightenment, and whoever has a chance ought to assist younger workers by teaching and other valuable guidance.

The *third task*, of supreme importance, is the true application of this knowledge in the spirit of brotherly love. And here, we come to the question of 'What is each one of us trying to give to his client?'

May I try to show it in the field of delinquency?

I believe that Dr. Van Waters, in her recent book, 'Youth in Conflict,' has developed a process of treatment which throws much light on this question and with which every worker with delinquents ought to be familiar. She names four essential steps in this process: (1) insight; (2) 'transference' (the inspiration of confidence); (3) the development of personality; and (4) the building of new social relationships.

The chief goal in this field of action is therefore to help each boy and girl to achieve these four essentials. This is the purpose and content of our plan in every case.

But what does it mean?

The *general plan* is to open for each child the channels which lead toward a fuller unfolding of his being and to guide his creative impulses so that they may not only not harm him or others, but become an asset to him, to his friends, to his home and to the community.

1. *The first essential:* We must help him to *arrive at insight*. We find that delinquency is nearly always an expression of open or hidden conflict in the child's life. This conflict may start with a trifle. Johnny is supposed to get wood after school. But he plays and fools around instead. Then he is afraid to go home; he will get a licking. He stays out. He is hungry and helps himself at the corner store. If he gets caught, this will be his first delinquency; if he gets by, it is an invitation into more serious delinquencies.

Ernesto's mother is sick. Every day she used to get him up in time for school. To-day, Ernesto is late. He hurries to school just the same, but he gets a 'red hand.' A few days later, the same thing happens. At the door of the school, Ernesto hasn't the nerve to go inside. He 'hooks it.' That was the initiation. He feels guilty and sneaks down to the 'movie' in order to forget. He cannot get in. He must have money. He snatches a quarter from a counter. He is a delinquent. Examples could easily be multiplied. *These boys* do not face the issue.

Another set of boys gets into trouble by following more experienced leaders. Companionship, mischief, imitation, excitement, love for adventure turned toward wrong ends and goals because of lack of good leadership lead boys of a very common type into trouble.

These things are simple. But we find, also, quite intricate conflicts. There is the boy who feels a curious desire to steal, because it relieves him from

an unexplainable pressure. Investigation shows that he does not succeed in school nor in any other thing, while his brother is a wonder. He has made efforts, but father and mother are used to his failures and have no faith in him. Well, then, why shouldn't he be bad? This same sort of discouragement often results in running away. And there is the boy who suddenly discovers that he is an illegitimate child and that his real mother denies that she is his mother. There are the queer conflicts of adolescence between son and father or son and mother. And there are the sex delinquencies of that age. Our first service to these children is to help them how to see themselves as they are and to teach them how to meet unpleasant life situations squarely. Quite often, this is a slow process which needs much patience and calmness. Only the worker who possesses the art to set a child's speech free is able to do it. That the worker must abstain from all force and pressure is self-evident. And he needs a fine knowledge of human nature. I also believe that he ought to have something of the humility of the young Russian Aljosha in Dostojewsky's 'Brothers Karamasoff,' who, in spite of his purity, when his debauched brother Dimitry asks him: 'Do you understand me, Aljosha?' replies simply: 'I, too, am a Karamasoff.'

It is equally important to give to the parents and to the older brothers and sisters some insight into the child's problem. This is the chief reason for home visits. A delicate task, I admit, and many

times harder than our work with the child himself. But nevertheless it is true that a conference with the family at their home after supper often does wonders.

2. *The second essential: 'transference.'* I prefer the term *inspiration of confidence*, although it does not quite cover transference. It is the relation between the child and the worker as a leader. It involves a bond of faith and confidence resulting in the child's desire to strive for the goals inspired by this leader. When a boy accepts such a leader, he does so because he likes him. He gives some of his affections to this leader. Here again we see why it is so essential that we should believe in the principle of love and comradeship — as the creative force building this bond. But in this bond there is a tremendous danger. Never should it happen that this relationship is an absorbing one. It must be rich and stimulating. It may be that with some boys the worker cannot build such a relationship. Then it is his job to find a club leader, an older brother, a teacher, or some man with the right attitude to assume this responsibility. This is the idea of the Big Brother movement.

3. *The third essential: The development of personality.* There are many different types of personality — for the sensitive eye of a keen observer there are almost as many as there are boys. And each age has different needs. But we may safely say that in each boy we find light and shadow and we may conclude that in each boy one of these sides will overpower

the other according to what traits are strengthened and how they are developed. We cannot now dwell on these varieties and on how to deal with them. The two most frequent types among delinquent boys may serve as illustration. Large is the number of boys who will not face an issue squarely or who in their present stage of mind seem unable to put up with an unpleasant situation. Both of these groups have to be prepared to meet their problems. Insight will show them their handicap. A clear outline of some definite goals in their own future will help them to concentrate their energy and efforts. For the younger boys it is their place in school, their quality of leadership in a club, their position at home. I know a number of quite difficult boys who gradually changed their attitude in school and at home after these goals had been made clear to them. In some instances this took a year or longer — but they won out at last. For the older boys it is their professional goal, their effort to use educational opportunities, and, again, their power of constructive leadership in clubs. At least at the beginning this type of boy must constantly be held up to the mark. At first it may be a real struggle between the boy and the worker, but if the boy once has realized that this is the test of his life and that this is the very meaning of 'giving him a chance,' he will work up to fair play. In some cases it takes months before his confidence is won to the extent of such coöperation. In some cases we never get it. And then we must



know how to stimulate innate abilities and natural interests. If we can discover some wholesome way of concentrating the boy's youthful energy on a hobby, I believe we have won him.

Eleven-year-old Mike was always on the street. Lately he has established a little workshop in his cellar and he is constructing 'scooters' for himself, for his two little brothers, and for some chums of his. He is becoming an expert at it. Albert has built two radio sets. Billy is crazy about his bicycle — he has invented some improvements on it, and he keeps it clean, too, sparkling clean. Henry has a couple of pigeons; he now spends most of his time on the roof improving coops. Fred became an expert fisherman. He knows most of the books which the library can offer on the subject. George is a great reader; he loves fairy tales most, but he has also read Dickens and Stevenson. He told some beautiful stories to his crowd on the doorsteps. Alec brought his gang to the settlement — they are going to beat the Norman Juniors soon to stop them from boasting. Benny plays the drum and Gaetano the cornet. They are both members of the school orchestra.

There is another very frequent type of the delinquent boy, full of energy and bubbling with strength and vigor. He loves pranks and fun and he never gets tired of 'starting something.' He has a large gang which is devoted to him and he has their confidence to the extent that they will follow him in committing successful breaks. Revere Beach is the

place to spend the booty — one must have plenty of money to be able to enjoy Revere Beach. This type of boy is the born leader. He has taught his gang many of the qualities which make for manhood and good citizenship — loyalty, courage, mutual help, comradeship, team work for a common goal, and the ability to keep silent at the proper moment; but all this, unfortunately, for a destructive and anti-social end. This boy is feared by the police. He is 'some tough nut' — he is the 'born criminal.' And yet he is the most valuable material if we can change his goals and replace them by vigorous, wholesome activities in settlements and boys' organizations. Only the best leader with a fine sense of this lad's possibilities and with much creative ability will be able to win this type of boy.

4. This leads us to the *fourth essential* in our plan of treatment. We must provide for the building of *new social relationships*. Adolf Meyer said once that 'it is in each man's social relationships that his mental history is largely written.' And it is true, we express ourselves chiefly in our relations to others.

Mike is now almost seventeen. He is a big, beautifully built boy. Last week he came into court with a broken nose. The previous night his crowd played pool, drank, and in a fight one of his pals gave him a good blow. Mike has a long record of delinquency, and yet he was always well liked in school, worked steadily, shows a good attitude at home, and each time that he was arrested did well

on probation. His only weakness is that he cannot break off from his gang. He has not established social relationships which can be a help to him instead of getting him into trouble. Josef, a younger boy, but of the same type, went to live with his uncle in the country during the summer. He came back into the same neighborhood, joined a club made up of a few of the better boys of his former gang and of some new boys with clean interests under the leadership of a good club leader. He *did* build good social relationships. Two weeks ago a sixteen-year-old boy asked me to find a farm for him where he could work for two months in order to break off from old companions and find new ones through the help of his older brother. This was his own idea.

I think little twelve-year-old Freddy knows best what we wish to achieve and to give. He came into court two years ago for about everything under the sun: hooking school for over five weeks, stealing in stores, bunking out, sex delinquencies with boys and girls. Neglect and a broken home were 'the cause' and things had gone so far because of his overflow of boyish energy. He seemed a hopeless case. Two placements were unsuccessful. In the third home a calm and patient, motherly woman, who had five boys of her own, took the pains to work with Freddy. He took money twice, but each time agreed to work for it. The youngest of the five sons became his best chum. He learned swimming and turned into a

first-rate baseball player. Every week he gets his books at the public library. After a year of placing he wanted to live again with his father and his oldest brother of whom he is very fond. He wrote to the judge: 'I want to go home or you will be very sorry. I have money to run away.' The judge took great pains to explain to him why he should stay where he was. Right after his talk with the judge, he ran off. The probation officer found him at his father's home the same night and talked again with him. The following day in court he was ready to go back to the country. One of his reasons for consenting was his good teacher. Three weeks ago I took him with me on a canoe trip. It was a marvelous evening. When the sun went down he exclaimed, 'Look, how everything is all gold.' In the canoe he began to tell how he read of the life of the Indians in the woods and remarked that it was wrong of the white man to take their land. A bright sparkling star was close to the moon. 'Look at the big and small brother,' he said, and went on: 'I am crazy about games and fun, but still more I like to lie all still, to look at the stars and to dream — oh, there is a big bunch of fine stories I read — Gee, it's great!' And we were silent until we landed. On the way home he said: 'Tell the judge that I know now that it is best for me to stay here. The city is bad anyway — no air and it gets you into trouble — the movies and all and the gangs.' This boy has arrived at insight. He has found his leaders — in his teacher and in the foster

mother. He is developing his personality in clean play, with a good attitude at home and in school. Good books are also his friends. He has the spirit of a fine leader himself, for when we were trying to place a colored boy who had run away from a camp because the boys called him names, Freddy declared, after the problem of this boy had been explained to him: 'I'll take care of him, you can be sure. I'll be a good brother to him and no one shall call him names out here.'

He built wholesome social relationships with the sons of the family and their friends. Freddy's imagination and the adventurous element in him is fed with the mental nourishment which wholesome surroundings and good books can give. He has learned how to cope with difficult life situations and to conquer his desires by the power of reason. The foster mother would not give up Freddy for anything — and we wouldn't either.

This is what we wish to give to these children. But we long to bring also far more beauty, far more wholesome outlets and far more security into their lives.

What I have outlined above sounds quite comforting and attractive. But I must add and emphasize that it is but a very small number to whom we succeed in being of such help. There are large crowds of yearning little souls who are forced to pick the weeds because no flowers grow in their way. There isn't enough light and sun and warmth for flowers where these boys are bound to live.



## III

If one spends three nights a week on the crowded city street of a city's poorer sections where these children are during all the many hours of their spare time, one cannot help being deeply depressed by a most alarming situation.

Valuing fully and sincerely the efforts of the schools of social workers and of other public-spirited citizens, I still accuse our modern community and our present-day civilization of physical, moral, and spiritual neglect of our city youth. There is *the home* of which we speak so constantly as being the binding and nourishing element. In how many of those families are the father and mother hardly making enough to feed and to clothe their young, who actually live on the street? The housing conditions are deplorable. And we social workers step in and give 'good advice' and we are glad not to break our necks in going down stairs again. Isn't the wear and tear of daily toil for the most urgent needs of each single day too hard a strain to make good fathers and mothers? Isn't the simple fact that people never are alone, that they are crowded into a few unattractive rooms, enough to create quarrel, nervousness, and thus constant friction and pressure? How many of us would not try to break all bonds for the sake of getting freedom and relief?

There are *the streets*, dark and filthy, with the sun for only a few hours a day and often scorching. Plenty of dark back alleys used by the little children

as playgrounds where they are easily exposed to sexual abuse by adults. Hardly a fit place, either, for adolescent boys and girls.

There are the *corner stores* where neighborhood gossip flows without restraint — where the children spend their money for candies, ice cream, and hot-dogs. They are also the places where young men get their information about the sources for booze and about 'bad houses.'

And there are those many places where young folk from five years up seek pleasure, fun, and amusement. *The movies* with their hair-raising signs and pictures done up in screaming colors — a flood of bad taste, distorted emotions, and crooked ideas. Strong sexual appeals, love a ridiculously sentimental and cheap affair, courage and heroism a problem of the fist and the revolver. Or that place near Scollay Square with some twenty boxes of pictures furnishing sex information — all for a nickel and open to the crowds of boys hanging around there with shoe-shining boxes and papers.

The air is filled with music, with the strangely beating rhythm of latest jazz, the true symbol of our time — no real melodies, for we have not the patience to listen, a kaleidoscope of broken harmonies. The boys whistle this stuff and the girls hum the flippant words, rhythmically moving their slender bodies — a tempting challenge to the warm blood of youth.

Not that I wish to repress those impulses of life

yearning for expression and unconsciously searching for beauty. But it is glaringly evident that they ought to be controlled and guided into proper channels. Of course, this is what we are trying to do. But how far do we succeed? If environment, physical and spiritual, is the most powerful element in moulding character — as I firmly believe — does not the question arise, whether the tremendous flood of these daily influences on the child is not altogether too powerful?

Isn't the real root of our trouble a problem of our civilization? Isn't it the materialistic spirit of our age which proclaims two standard ideals: 'making a good living' — no matter how — and having a 'good time' in a show or a dance hall? Isn't it true that this generation sacrifices the coming generations — our children — to its egotistic desires?

Thus we begin to recognize our biggest goal which is to build toward a socially organized democratic community. Let us joyously take the responsibility together with great labor leaders and with socially minded community organizers. Let us follow the ideals of great souls like Jane Addams and Julia Lathrop.

How should we like to have a community look if we built it anew? I believe that light and space are two most powerful forces working for a clean community. Wide streets with well-built, spacious houses — parks and playgrounds, clubhouses and

settlements enough to cope with the needs of our children. Not luxurious — but filled with sun and with air. This, of course, sounds too much like Utopia — and yet do we ever stop to think that if a bank decides to erect a building in some block, within a few weeks that block is torn down and a few months later a palace of marble stands on its place? Do we ever realize that while our money is most marvelously cared for and developed, hundreds and thousands of our city children actually play in the gutter?

The settlements are, I believe, the most hopeful field of social work, provided they do creative work with leaders who love children and who know how to feed their imagination and to guide their creative impulse. In play: develop leadership, team spirit, the sense for fair play, ingenuity, endurance, chivalry, courage. In art: this country has very beautiful folk-songs, but the children don't know them. In Europe, the youth movement of the last twenty years has again brought the precious treasure of almost forgotten folk-songs into its rights. There are plenty of good classic and modern composers to replace jazz in our children's orchestras. Another attempt to develop good taste in music are the children's concerts of the Symphony Orchestra. In dramatics many of us have enjoyed the gay colors and lovely melodies of the pageant put on by the settlements for the Fourth of July on the Common. A settlement which undertakes to stage the Russian

play 'Petrushka' is truly fulfilling its mission. And there are the many beautiful things done by some settlements in handcrafts. In work: we badly need more opportunities for manual training. The trade schools are over-filled and hundreds of boys are turned away. The workshop idea is hardly known yet. Our attempts in this line are poor, indeed.

We have many settlements in Boston and some of them lead the country. But the trouble is that they are but islands in a vast sea of destructive influences. To carry this work so far that it truly permeates the neighborhood and the community as a strong, creative, living force is one great task for our constructive efforts, and this task needs all our support.

But even in these constructive efforts we handicap ourself by lack of faithful team work. There is not enough coöperation between the schools and the settlements! We jealously watch our 'spheres' and there is no joy in our hearts when some one does better than we. If we really give ourselves to this cause, let us be big, indeed, and join in our efforts.

What is needed in the way of *control*? I do not believe much in repression and yet there are elements which no community ought to permit. The movie situation is a public scandal. The same is true of some papers. I wonder whether we could not create a keener public opinion in this line?

Equally corrupting is the industrial situation of young boys and girls. A frightful instability and lack



of security, utterly uncreative and mechanical tasks — are we really raising a generation of “Robots”? Then the street trades by which hundreds of boys under the guise of helping their families are induced to cheat their parents daily in regard to the full amount of their earnings. I have boys between twelve and fourteen years of age who spend Sunday after Sunday between two dollars and three dollars at Revere Beach. The end is usually delinquency of some kind. What of the control of the social forces which are supposed to be constructive? Take the field of juvenile delinquency. Much has been said and written about juvenile courts and probation. And yet there are courts in Boston which are constantly acting against the very principles for which they are organized. Probation service is utterly inefficient when out of a group of eight boys previously dealt with by other courts — three of them as many as four and five times over a period of two years — only two of the mothers ever saw a probation officer in their homes!

Courts detain young boys for days in jail and police officers put them through a regular third degree with the excuse: ‘No use to bother with them kids — they are bad anyway!’

#### IV

We need, therefore, a central body of understanding and socially spirited men and women joining with the best leaders in each special field. This body

should stimulate and support our constructive efforts and exercise wholesome control by forming public opinion through surveys and the giving out of authentic information. I wonder whether those courts could go on making the public believe they are doing good work if their poor methods and ill-handled cases were brought to light? Why can't we adopt the method used by the Carnegie Foundation for improving medical service? I believe that new and better methods would emerge and this survey would become constructive.

It has been said that the social worker must be an artist in understanding and in dealing with human beings. We cannot do too much to develop ourselves in that line. But beyond this the social worker must become a social student with a keen, critical mind discarding social prejudices and pointing out without fear the really destructive forces in our modern communities. Above all, he should unmask those social forces which pretend to be constructive, but in fact are unscrupulously destructive. Here he cannot be radical enough!

I am aware that I have said nothing new. There are many of us who work in the spirit of these wider goals. But the really essential thing is that every one shall begin to realize that we must grow beyond our narrow limits of case work, club work, etc., and join those leaders who are filled with the dreams and ideals of a better community and who are con-

sciously and constantly heading for that goal. If we support them in spirit and in action, we shall gain strength, we too shall grow and we all shall approach the truly democratic community — the community which provides for the welfare of all, not of a few groups only.

# LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY, AND THEN SOME

BY JOSEPH LEE

*President of the National Playground Association*

THE business of social work is healing the sick — those who are sick in certain kinds of ways. The object of healing is to make people well, and our idea of our object must be our idea of what it is to be well. As a friend of mine says of men who are always keeping themselves fit, 'Fit for what?'

The same is true of medicine, of education, and of the Church. It is true of law and government. These also must have some answer to the question, 'What is health?' in order to know what they are aiming at. And, if correct, their answers must all be the same. It is the same mountain peak we all are seeking, although we each approach it from a different side. It is the social worker's path that I shall follow. If it seems to the reader that in following it I often speak of treatment rather than of the aim, it is because the state of salvation, like the beatific vision, begins where language ends and can only be described by indirection.

## EFFECTIVE SOCIAL AIMS

There is such a thing as having a national idea of what we want people to be. Among savages and

among barbarians also — through most of the history of the human race — the aim has been to make men warriors. This idea has been successfully carried out. Our own Indians produced real fighters. Parkman tells us that the Iroquois were so obsessed with fighting that they picked quarrels with tribes so very distant that they could not possibly interfere with them and so kept on fighting, in the period just before the Revolution, until about half their men were killed. The Indians also succeeded in evolving their special sort of heroism to an almost superhuman pitch: courage in single-handed enterprises — stealing into the other people's camp and murdering them — and enduring torture without giving a sign.

The Spartans attained a similar success in producing soldiers and the soldier virtues. Long afterwards the war ideal, the fighting ideal — for it was here largely that of single combat — blazed into beauty in the age of chivalry, of Saint Michael in his shining armor — although to fighting was now added love-making and something of poetry and song.

Then with the Renaissance came the ideal of the gentleman-and-scholar — that incredible combination of the dazzling ornament of camps and courts with the poor, starved creature whose life was spent over manuscripts and ink; almost the farthest from him in the social scale. So we have such splendid figures as the Chevalier Bayard and Sir Philip Sidney.



Then there is the ideal type bred in the English public school (so called because it is not public) aiming to produce the rulers of the British Empire, the presence of which purpose in everything its pupils do — in cricket and football and in their school work — is vital in its effect.

In this country there was the ideal of the Puritans, to establish the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth — a country wherein the soul of man might live, peopled by those especially formed to be its citizens. Their notion of how to go about it was a narrow one, but the purpose was very definite and their undertaking was really a very sporting proposition. And considering the difficulty of producing the sort of citizen they had in mind, they made notable progress in that direction.

Finally we had the ideal of American democracy as it flourished in New England between 1820 and 1850 or thereabouts — the happy days when people still believed we might succeed, the days of public libraries and lyceum hall in every town, with lectures by Holmes and Emerson, Channing and George William Curtis.

The most inclusive, and with one exception best of all as measured by its service to the world, was the ideal of Athens: to produce citizens fit at once for war and art and science — for the pursuit of virtue, truth and beauty — as the true aim of the State.

These are ideals which people have had in the

past of what it is to be a man — the conscious aim of all their education and of their laws; and their pursuit of these ideals was to a great extent successful. There is such a thing, even in the quantity production of human beings, as knowing what you want and partly getting it.

It is true that in these instances, or most of them, purposeful selection was employed as well as education. Among savages and barbarians, demonstrated prowess in war — sometimes evidenced by the production of the other party's head — was a condition of being considered a man, allowed as such to marry. In the age of chivalry having killed your man was requisite to good social standing. It is said that among the maidens of Nantucket having killed your whale was a condition of acceptance. In Greece deformed children were exposed and left to die, and I suppose a similar custom has been through the ages widely prevalent. But we also can do something in selection — through segregation, through individual preference, in which custom has a considerable influence, and through the setting up of a democratic standard which shall render the successful the more apt to marry instead of the less so as at present. So that what past ages have achieved in the moulding of human character toward a strongly held ideal is not necessarily beyond our scope.

These that I have spoken of are the ideals of other peoples and of the past. What, then, are ours?

## THE ANALOGY OF LAW

I think we can find in law something of an analogy to what we want. Law started out without a theory — it hardly has one even now. It began with no idea of what man ought to be. Its only aim was order — anything for a quiet life. Its method was to offer some substitute for fighting as the proper and accepted remedy for injury sustained. In short, it took over the function of wreaking vengeance. The injuries of which it thus took notice were naturally those which men would otherwise avenge. Indeed, I think the proper definition of *injuria* — the old term for those aggressions of which the law took cognizance — is those kinds of treatment which men will jolly well avenge themselves unless the law will do it for them. Thus the law took over the blood feud and saw to it that the man who did the killing was killed himself so that the family of the deceased would not have to look after that piece of business. It saw to it that a penalty was exacted from anybody who unjustifiably maimed or struck another, or who imprisoned him or stole his cow.

The law went further in two very interesting ways. It gave — and must, I think, in very early time have given — a remedy in the case of slander or libel — that is to say, for an attack upon a man's social character and reputation. And eventually it did another interesting thing when, in the law of contract, it recognized the right of enforcing an obligation voluntarily assumed. (The sense of so-

cial obligation based on blood or status was indeed much older than the law of contract, as was most religiously and heroically exemplified in the blood feud above alluded to.)

Taking this Philistine point of view, accepting human nature as it found it and providing redress only for those injuries against which men would instinctively and violently react, the law supplied valuable evidence as to human nature's primary demands. A line so plotted along the frontier which men will thus instinctively defend gives us a reliable though rudimentary outline of what it is to be a man. This outline does not give us much detail. It is somewhat like a blanket thrown over a statue. It shows us where the main bumps and protuberances are, but not the finer features of the work. It is interesting to note that it follows fairly closely the instinctive reactions of a child — against being struck, having his things taken away from him, being laughed at, and above all against being held so that he can't move — the loss of liberty. *Life, liberty* (possession and use of his own body), *property, and personality* are in both instances the main requirements.

Perhaps, for its value as analogy, I ought to mention the doubtless much later *law of nuisance* — the remedy for æsthetic grievances. First of the senses to get recognition — after touch, the sensibilities of which were recognized in remedy for assault — there came, I think, the sense of smell. (Hence laws of public hygiene.) Then hearing. And last and very

recently comes sight — through legislation under the police power. The order is the same as that of the intensity of bodily reaction in men and animals.

#### THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Social work at the beginning took very much the same point of view. As law provided remedies for those injuries which a man would resent if inflicted on himself, so social work at first sought to treat those evils, however arising, which men will not tolerate as they affect another. The first evil it attacked was bodily suffering. The first service was to feed the hungry, care for the sick, and — not first in point of time but logically following — to prevent cruelty to children. This is the charity of the good Samaritan. Its aim is to cure or alleviate bodily distress. Physical suffering is apt to be underestimated when it happens in the past or in the future or to somebody other than ourselves, because it does not proportionally impress the memory. But it is not so when it affects ourselves and now. I once got a cinder in my eye and I remember very distinctly my feeling that no undertaking could be of such vast importance as its removal. A cinder in one's own eye shuts out all the world.

This original aim of social work is not to be slighted or despised. "For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed



me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

After the treatment of physical ills, the natural extension of our aim is in their prevention: and so we have hygiene, housing, economics.

#### LIBERTY — THE KING'S HIGHWAY

After being 'not-sick' comes being well. Social idealism aims at producing a serviceable body and establishes physical training in the schools. It seeks to give all men a useful mind, founds libraries, museums, and lecture courses that all may have entrance into the great world of knowledge. It is much concerned with *property*, the next widening circle of effectiveness, including that wonderful extension of the body, in tools and instruments, foretold in man's possession of the hand, the socket in which any tool, from a paddle to a violin bow, may be set. Property is necessary to liberty in a civilized community. What would Paderewski's life or liberty be worth if all pianos were to be destroyed? It pays great attention to *the home* as the instrument and expression of the heart, and sees that *tools and the homestead* shall be exempt in case of bankruptcy. It understands the spiritual value of *money* — that wonderful representative of power-in-general, and promotes savings banks, insurance, mutual benefit societies, studies political economy, and produces among other prophets Karl Marx. The socialists

are often criticized for being materialists because the raising of wages is their aim. But the criticism is unsound. *The curse of the poor is still their poverty.* If there is anything on earth you want to do, whether good or bad, any purpose you care to carry out; if you desire to live and do the work yourself or to enable others to live and do it, you have need of money. The real objection of socialism, apart from the industrial tyranny involved, is that it would not raise wages but would lower them. (The Soviets have given, and accepted, the latest demonstration.)

The aim of the sort of social work thus far described is liberty — the securing for each a body, a mind, tools, a home, and money as instruments with which to carry out his purposes. It is the philosophy of the King's Highway. The King's Highway means the road on which it is not considered right to kill people. Besides having his body, his tools, and his house, and not being actually imprisoned, it was found that the citizen needed sometimes to go to market in order to sell his produce and buy the other things he wanted, and that if he was killed on the way to market or coming home it interfered a great deal with his plans. So the King proclaimed that on certain specified roads this killing business was not going to be allowed. It would be too much to rule that you must not kill people anywhere at all — the thieves and robbers had to have some place in which to ply their calling. It is a curious instance of the changes that civilization has brought about that

the highway is now the place especially reserved for killing people with immunity. But in those primitive days killing on the King's Highway was held to be bad form and the law was taken very seriously, just as in a similar way the church was considered sanctuary. (It was not etiquette to kill a man holding on to the altar. Anywhere at all in the church it was unpopular.)

This is the philosophy of liberty. It is founded on the belief that all roads lead to Rome or to Zion; that the soul knows its own way and requires only that the road shall be made open. It is the carrying out in positive form of the old objection to imprisonment. There was a case once — a most characteristic picture both of the common law and of the Englishman who made it — in which the plaintiff, who was coming into town across one of London's bridges, was interrupted by an enclosure running across the sidewalk — I should say 'pavement' — and containing some benches put up there for people to watch the Oxford-Cambridge race. He promptly sued the man who put up the grandstand for imprisonment, claiming that in being prevented from walking on the sidewalk he was imprisoned. And so he was, although the case went against him. He was imprisoned in all the rest of the world except the ground covered by that grandstand. Now, liberty, beginning in its revulsion against imprisonment within four walls, is the pushing back of those walls until the free space includes the entire planet and the realms beyond.

## CONSERVATION OF MOTIVE

This establishing of liberty must always be one of the aims of social work. The soul knows its way of life — at least it has some intimations of it that are shared by no other creature — and a cardinal condition of its life is being free to follow it.

And yet there is something left to do. The assumption of this philosophy of the King's Highway is that the traveler is already wholly there and fit to start out on his journey. But suppose he isn't. Suppose that in opening the road or in your previous treatment in the lessening of suffering you have not only failed to free but have actually shackled him.

And so we have the dread word — 'pauperize.' *It means that you have stolen a man's motive*; you have taken away from him something without which he cannot act or cannot extend himself to his full capacity. 'The catamount was chasing him and the dog climbed a tree.' 'But dogs can't climb trees.' 'Yes, but this dog *had* to, because the catamount was only two jumps behind.' We are all of us much like that dog. Even Thackeray could not do his writing without the printer's devil at the door. The wolf at the door has been our ancient ally in this life — he is the most useful member of the crowd. Dog, wolf, or devil — when you have withdrawn the motive of his instant need, you may have paralyzed the man. He needs not only the open road in front, but the wolf two jumps behind as part of his equipment in the pursuit of liberty.

(It should be noted that we have already withdrawn another great motive — to which thousands of the world's heroes must have been indebted — in our abolition of the blood feud, and I suppose it is still a question whether we have lost or gained there by.)

So in order not to rob men of their motive we are very careful how we give them the means of life. We do not mind giving them lectures, schools, Harvard College, libraries, art, music, scenery, and playgrounds — anything they don't want — but we are very careful in administering that most dangerous drug — the necessities. Or, we couple the gift, if possible, with some new duty — obligation to family or friend — even the obligation to spend the money purposefully. We try to see that the man shall live in his relations and not on them.

So here in the pursuit of liberty there is, besides the King's Highway, this second need — the *conservation of motive*, the necessary spur. Our object is a motivative man.

#### EQUALITY

But gift has in it something worse even than the drawing-off of motive. A mendicant cannot be free. Even acceptance acknowledges dependence and dependence forfeits self-respect. There is deep in all of us the feeling that a man should be self-sustaining, a sovereign dealing with other sovereigns on equal terms. He must not owe his life or his support to any



man. What he receives must measure, not his need of others, but their need of him. Indeed, through most of the world's history and down to very recent times, even business was considered despicable. The laws of Lycurgus prohibited trade and manufactures. The wild tribes of Northern Africa have a proverb — 'Dishonor comes with the plow.' In all barbarous society and in all aristocracies, which form a part of it, the only respectable title to property is to be able to prove that you or your ancestors have stolen it — that there was no base subservience to the laws of trade or other bourgeois ordinances.

Back of this ancient view there is the truth that the soul of man is by its first requirement autonomous; the voice to which it owes allegiance is within. A man may take advice, may obey a king — and I should sometime like to write an essay on the place of the king in a democracy. A man may give, but may not sell himself. And there is a limit even to the extent to which he can, even of free gift, surrender his autonomy. Plato says that when you want to go to Delos you employ a pilot. But Aristotle adds the important comment that it is you and not the pilot who must prescribe the destination. He must go to Delos as you order and not take you to some slave market or other place you have not chosen. The king or priest is still the soul's official, not its master — king or priest *ad hoc*. The Kingdom of Heaven is within you. One act of sovereignty the human soul cannot perform — it cannot abdicate.

So we have the teaching of Emerson that gift is contrary to the law of nature. 'I give the dollar, but it is a dishonest dollar, which bye and bye I shall have the manhood to refuse.' We hate our gift and will try to give it without knowing we have done so, letting not even our right hand know what our left hand has done. This is the democratic point of view, voiced even by Nietzsche — who seems to have got whatever was good in him from Emerson and is very like him in this part of his teaching. It is the view of those who love the man too well to inflict upon him the injury of gift. Refusal shows a higher sympathy. The charity of democracy is stern — exacting, the very antithesis of the 'poor devil' or aristocratic attitude. Haughty is the soul of man and must not be thus approached. As Paul Morton somewhat crudely described the free and happy individual, he should be able to look every man in the face and tell him to go to Hell.'

Insult is the greatest injury there is, the true reason for most strikes, for class war in all its forms, the one wrong for which the action of the law is never adequate and the one for which the French, the truly social nation, have reserved the very word *injure*.

And so we have this other purpose of social work — that in all it does and all it aims to do it may in all ways utterly revere the core of personality.

It is this respect for the spiritual integrity of every

man that democratic religion has called 'equality' — meaning not that men have all the same height or weight or even the same spiritual power, not that they are in anything quantitatively equal, but that they are of the same kind in that each is, so far as he exists at all, a representative of that ultimate authority which is all we know of the divine. The best statement of this great doctrine, since the New Testament, is by Lacordaire: 'L'homme n'a pas seulement besoin de pain, il a besoin de dignité. Il est, par sa nature même, une dignité.'

So that all true charity is self-destructive. It hates dependence and strives with all its might to make itself unnecessary. When it must give it tries with almost pitiful insistence to disguise the gift under the name of insurance, perhaps, or of the minimum wage — probably with some small effect in the economy of self-respect. Still better, it tries to merge the gift in some reciprocal relation.

#### FRATERNITY

Should this, then, be the whole? Are the road and the wolf — the means of action and the stimulus — enough? Are they enough even together with the reverencing of that inmost chamber of the soul through which the spirit enters? Are there not specific ends, specific relations to which man is committed by his nature, the fulfillment of which is of his very substance?

In infant asylums, even with the best physical

care, a great proportion of the children die. The reason is that they are even physically starved for lack of the relation of child and mother. Child and mother are not independent creatures, but two sides of a single relation in which both have their life. Their separation is a partial death, and it is a discovery of our social workers that, though it must in extreme cases be undertaken, it is a capital operation. The same thing is true of child and home, of husband and wife, brother and sister, of the boy and his gang. It is true in a degree of a man and his comrades in the same profession, of the soldier, citizen, club member, of those bound together in all sorts of memberships. These relations, obligations, bonds — ties is the word I want — seeming limitations of the individual — are also his spiritual members, the roots and branches he puts forth, the leaves through which he breathes, the buds and blossoms of his life. Except as he is parent, child, friend, associate, patriot, man lacks a necessary dimension of his soul.

So the next aim of the social worker is to foster these relations, to produce not pebbles on the beach but members bound closely in by all the human ties. Even the good Samaritan was spiritually a neighbor — neighbor meaning, as the word is used, guild-brother — a person bound to help his fellow member in sickness or misfortune, to avenge him if he is killed, to take over all the obligations that in those days bound the family. Fraternity is the word that

democracy has accurately applied to this great fact that the tree lives only in the leaf, the leaf as it contains the tree.

#### AND THEN SOME

But suppose that all these things had been achieved. Suppose there were no misfortunes in the world, or at least none unrelieved. Suppose further that every one were possessed of a strong body and a serviceable mind, of tools and property, that all roads were open to him together with normal stimulus to follow one of them. Suppose that, in addition, a mutual reverence for individuality had been established together with enlistment in the many loyalties of which the individual life to such a great extent consists. Suppose, in short, that there were no evils left, or, as Mr. Dooley put that terrible condition, that we had not an enemy in the whole weary world. What would there then be for us to do? You say that we should live for others, serve our friends, our family, our country. But what service could we render them? They would be just as fatally well off as ourselves. You cannot create an aim worth living for by simply attributing it to some one else. If nobody has a want that is unattended to, how is it possible to attend to it? The Puritans thought that righteousness was a guide to life — but in what, unless there is some object to be served, does righteousness consist? You can't just go out in a field and be good. There must first be some good



to do. You can't steer north if north has been abolished. Is there no positive thing on earth that we desire — that we would still seek if there were no evils left? Is evil so far our good that without it we should have nothing left to live for?

This is a very practical question in America. The lack of some such north, of something worthy of our service, not because it leads to something else, but because it is life itself, may be called *the American disease* — a natural result perhaps of Puritanism. America is the land of speed — but whither? To those who have arrived, the end of their journey is a desert.

This is the subject of every American story of the present day, the story of the business man who has made his pile, reached the success he was aiming at, won his victory and found that it is no victory for him. These books tell of his surprised bewilderment as to what the trouble is and of his pathetic floundering to find the remedy — sometimes in the form of running off with some one else's wife and then finding that she is very much the sort of wife he had before, and being no better off than when he started. The same thing is seen in humbler circles. Jane Addams showed it in her picture of the spirit of youth with its longing for romance, confronted by the city streets — their life extinguished, not in lurid tragedy, but in a pervasive grayness which is worse.

The remedy is in finding something we can live toward — some positive good that we can seek. Our

need is of a reaching up toward the blossom of life — a north to sail toward — the thing that all the rest is for. And *the north toward which the human soul is set is beauty* — at least beauty is the voice and symbol of it, the nearest representative our eyes can see of what we ultimately desire.

And our pursuit of the beautiful must be in part direct. It is true there is beauty in fraternity, beauty in love, and in the reverence for personality that is a part of it. There is the beauty of holiness and beauty in the search for truth. It is true also that pursuits not recognized as art may be carried to the point where they shine. 'This also' — our daily humdrum life — 'must sing and soar.'

But these are not enough. There must be beauty in creation, and in most people's lives and work there is little room for the creative spirit — in hardly any is there room enough. There goes up from the people of this country a call so faint the Muses cannot hear.

So social work is turning to the service of this unknown god of *beauty*. From the first the social workers have seen something of this necessity — have encouraged the poor woman to keep the geranium growing in her window, to have a flower stuck in the broken vase on the dinner table, to wash her windows, keep the floor clean, and have pretty dresses for her children — even to steal an opportunity to walk up into the retail district and look into the shop windows, to take a day off in the

country when she can. They have known from the very beginning that the flower grows toward the light and cannot grow where light has been extinguished. This is the meaning of our settlements, of community service, and of the playground movement — to kindle in the community a light toward which young life can grow, something to fill the soul and the imagination, something that speaks to us as ultimately worth while, a representation of the 'It' we are all seeking. Without such vision the people perish, and this is the final aim of social work.

I want to add one caution in connection with this aim — to speak of what I call the vital paradox. Beauty is great medicine, a savior of our life, a great preventive of wrongdoing. But we must not turn to beauty for this service. You cannot enlist the Muses as policewomen, or take a little beauty for your stomach's sake. By that course you will reach neither beauty nor the good it does; the goddess will not condescend to such appeals. Not what you can get out of her, but how, with your best endeavor and by great good fortune, you may in any line or syllable pay fitting tribute, must be your quest — your motive not thrift but adoration. In art, as in every other real pursuit, he that saveth his life shall lose it. It is only what you give that you can keep.

#### THE STREAMS OF LIFE

The single aim of social work, including all the aims that I have spoken of, is that man shall be a

channel to the streams of life, open to the great purposes that constitute humanity, those purposes of which he is the incarnation. Man is a wire which a magic current passes through — deep calling unto deep — the real within him to the real without. Liberty is the keeping open of the outer equality of the inner door through which life enters. Art and loyalty are two great elements of the vital current.

## DIRECTING THE URGE-TO-BE-GREAT

BY GEORGE P. CAMPBELL

*Principal of the Shirley Reform School for Boys*

WE have set for ourselves the task of discussing the ends involved in social work. Any consideration of the welfare of society deals largely with human conduct, its control and guidance. In training the boys of to-day — that is, the men of to-morrow — to what end shall we try to control and guide their conduct?

My thesis is this, that we must try so to deal with our lads that they will make the world a little better because they have lived in it. Better, I say, yet I will make no attempt to define 'better.' What seemed better in ages past is, in many cases, no longer better, and what is best in our day and age may not be best a hundred years hence. I do, however, take better to involve progress, traveling on an open road, winding hither and thither, the essential thing being that we travel. Better also must involve the welfare of the race and the welfare of the individual only in so far as it makes for the welfare of mankind. I doubt not that we all agree that anything that is not for the welfare of the race is not for the ultimate welfare of its individuals. Yet our sentimental attitude toward lawbreakers and our present-day fetish-worship of modern methods of distribution (called 'business')



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is evidence that the individual looms so big before us that we fail to see beyond to the needs of the race. I am constantly checking myself from saying to boys and young men, 'Make a man of yourself, keep away from the gang.'

'Keep away from the gang?' Certainly not! Life must be lived in the gang. Who wants to live alone? This conference is a gang. Our churches and our lodges are gangs. Live in the gang, but live in one that considers the welfare of society, and then be of service to that gang. 'We belong' is the school motto at Shirley, and Heaven knows we need that motto everywhere. We say amen to the dictum 'he profits most who serves best' — but do we really believe it?

If our end is to be attainable it must square with the facts of human life. Now, this tinkering with the lives of other people — our particular work — is ticklish business at best and made more so when we fail to consider the facts of life as an integration rather than an addition of our various qualities. I would have you keep this truth in mind as I try to consider with you a few phases of our existence that have direct bearing upon the end in view.

### I. DIRECT BUT DON'T DAM UP THE URGE-TO-BE-GREAT

The great outstanding fact of life is this: it is centered around a striving, an urge, an energy seeking an outlet. That this energy must be directed is perfectly obvious, but that it cannot be dammed up

and made non-effective is equally true. The danger to the social group from the vigor of this individual drive is so great that we have come to say constantly to our youth, don't — don't — don't. 'Thou shalt not' is held so constantly before them that we are repeatedly viewing the results of a wild break into the do — do — do.

An outgrowth of this fear of the individual is a desire to make our children duplicates of ourselves in a perfectly unwarranted belief that what we are, or at least what we would be, is the last word in perfection. I am the last one in the world to advocate unbridled freedom. Shore up the torrent and build sluiceways and help the lad to find the way that he can best use. But do not be afraid to let a little of the energy go over the spillway and wander where it will, for it is through this part of his energy that we shall get much of the progress for himself and for the group.

## II. HOW WE NOURISH THE CHILD'S SENSE OF INFERIORITY

Out of life's strivings, out of its constantly recurring appetite, comes the great human cry, 'I want,' 'I want'; and the most insistent of all wants is this, 'I want to be great.' This cry we are forever denying and in so doing we develop that greatest of human fears, the fear of inferiority. Man is, I believe, the most timid of animals. But in civilized conditions the fear of this and that physical danger has come to

be replaced by the fear of inferiority. This fear has been much talked over of late and much fun has been made of it, in many cases properly no doubt. Yet we fail to realize its importance and that of its converse: *'I want to be of some account in this world.'*

Whatever we do to or for our children we cannot hope for progress unless they can be rid of the fear of inferiority (of 'I can't') and are held up by the belief that they can. Certainly half at least of the failures that come to me — and I firmly believe that much more than half of the stagnation and failure of our youth — is due to their experiences with the present day public school system which has not only failed to develop in them the taste for and love of conquest and of victory, but has produced in them a fearful feeling of 'I can't' and 'What is the use?'

The law says the child must go to school until it is fourteen years of age and has passed the sixth grade, or until it has reached the sixteenth year without passing the sixth grade. Yet I am credibly informed that in at least two of the large cities in Massachusetts there are some three thousand children who are compelled to attend school, although they cannot go any higher in the grades and who do not know what it is all about. When they reach this stage they are labeled as either dull or stupid, or bone lazy. For the best hours in the day and sometimes for several years, they never taste the joy of success, and before their schoolmates whose good opinion is their ruling force they are looked down upon. In many cases

they search and find the needed sense of greatness and worth-whileness in delinquent ways that are their own undoing and that of society. If one cannot be a better scholar than the others, or as good, he can at least be a better tough or a better crook. Or if they are of another type their school failures make them devoid of any ambition and they simply clog up the wheels of progress.

### III. THE CURSE OF 'HIGHER EDUCATION'

Oh, how we are cursed with our traditional idea of higher education! I have come fairly to hate that term 'higher education.' Every day I sit at a desk, as fine as money can buy, made by a lad who because he could not multiply

$$\frac{567}{783} \text{ by } \frac{429}{368}$$

was condemned by his teacher as a dull boy, and despaired of by his parents as never going to be of any use in the world.

I have in mind another lad who could not read or write, a great fellow over six feet tall, rugged and able, who cried like a baby, broken-hearted because he could make no headway in school, and yet had been kept in school until he was sixteen years of age. He felt that he really was of no account. Yet he is one of the finest men with an axe that I have ever seen. He could lay down a tree just where he wanted it and cut a clean stump, and in the end he came to

be a very good rough carpenter. Who will dare to say that a pharmacist or a lawyer will make more for the progress of mankind than a carpenter, mason, or woodchopper, or even a good ditch-digger?

I have in mind an illustration from Dr. Walter Fernald — one of the best of men. He likened the body of knowledge to a large rectangular building many stories high and with windows on all sides. He likened a child's mind to a ladder, and the typical school process as this: In the first grade we put the ladder up to the first-story window and let the child look in; the next year the ladder has grown so we put it higher up, to the next window, let him look in there, and so on up. When at last the ladder ceases to grow and the child can look no farther, we begin to prod and coax him until he hangs on by his fingertips and does the best he can, finally failing altogether to see inside at all. It seems not to occur to us that the ladder can be moved around to other windows on other sides at any level that the child can attain, and that thus he can keep on going to school profitably. I have put this proposition up to many old teachers. Can they keep a fourth or fifth grade child in school with interest and profit until he is sixteen, providing that they are free to teach whatever the child can grasp? The answer has always come back to me, 'Yes, certainly.'

Why not find each child's abilities and build up a self-respect that will make life worth living for him and make him of service to the group rather than to



follow a rigid scheme of education which sometimes seems as if it were planned to locate all his disabilities and fix in his mind the inevitable fact of failure.

#### IV. MORAL SENSE IS UNIVERSAL BUT DIFFERENT IN EACH

But, even though a man can, and believes he can, be of use in the world, unless he *wants* to be of use we are out of luck. Now, I have no delusion about pure, innate altruism. The self and its wants are intimately interwoven with all our conduct. But if the lad can succeed and believes that he can, then the very experiences through which he passes so as to reach his attitude will tend at least to direct his *need-to-be-great* into the channel of service. Loyalty and a sense of belonging are forms of the sense of greatness. They are also what we term moral qualities. Well, all morals are social, and we are born into our morals as we are born into the language which we speak. True, there is a vast difference between men in a quantitative way, but the qualities of feeling upon which our moral possibilities are based are seldom if ever entirely lacking. At one time I felt (as I find many others still do) that there are many who lack any efficient moral sense. But we should remember that what is moral in our time and our country may not be moral in another time or in another group of society.

We call the South Sea Islander who puts his grandparents out of the way, or the East Indian woman

who destroys her child, immoral. Yet from their standpoint they are doing a highly moral act. When a boy constantly misbehaves we should not be too ready to condemn him as devoid of moral sense. He usually has his own code. Neither can I accept the phrases about 'a weak will,' and 'falling into temptation,' as good explanations of his behavior until I have discovered the individual's basic moral attitude. We should realize that very early in life our youth drift away from us. Parents and teachers very early cease to be important forces in moulding the boy's moral attitude. Our relationship very early becomes that of 'friendly enemies' and they fail to understand us as we fail to understand them. The lack of shame among wrongdoers is proverbial. Yet among themselves they have a moral code that many times is most binding. It is very enlightening to find, when you get down under the skin, that some men really believe heartily that any one will steal if he dares to, and that it is all right to do so. Their only source of shame is that of getting caught. Also there are some who honestly believe that a man is a fool if he will not lie to keep himself out of trouble. These are moral standards, only they are not our standards. No, there is no reason to despair of the lack of moral sense.

We are all interested in social welfare; that is, interested in making the world a little better as we see it. I have tried to discuss the what and the why rather than the 'how' — the ultimate end rather

than the means. It is a great help to know where one is going and why. It gives a sense of accomplishment and leads us to a better adaptation of our means. I have simply tried to point out to you the need of understanding the raw material of social betterment — the youth of to-day and the men of to-morrow — looking at them with an open mind, before condemning the material with which we work either as to ability, confidence, energy, or its possibilities for right moral attitudes.

Let us hitch our wagon to a star; that helps especially if it is a guiding star. That does not, however, prevent us from keeping our feet on the ground, and that is where we must keep them if we are to leave a trail somewhere for some one to follow.

## PART II

### THE GOAL OF SOCIAL WORK FOR ADULTS





## MENTAL OSMOSIS

BY WILLIAM ERNEST HOCKING

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I AM to speak of the object of social work among adults. The name 'social work' is significant. You no longer refer to your calling as one of philanthropy nor of mutual aid. You speak of a type of work, as though you were engaged in a sort of engineering, a constructive task, something more than a social repair shop, something different from reconstruction or re-education. The profession of the social worker is different from that of the physician in this respect. The human body is an organism, and if any part of the human body is out of tune with the rest, the need is for something in the nature of cure or repair. But the social body is not an organism in any complete sense, and if a part of it is out of tune with the rest, it is not entirely certain that the part is wrong and the rest right. The need is for something in the nature of widely considerate constructive thought and action.

In the name 'social work' there is implied the intention to express good will in action rather than in words. It carries with it a discounting of all talk and a recognition of the physical basis of life. Social work begins with the concrete. Pressing physical needs must be relieved. If health is lacking, the body must

be restored. It has a satisfaction in common with that which many found in 'war-work,' where the physical needs are so immense that there is no hesitation of the will as to the direction it must take. In this primary physical object of social work there is expressed another attitude which is typically American — the pragmatic spirit. We believe that when the machine is working perfectly the thoughts which accompany that activity are likely to be sound. We set the man on his feet by putting him where he works well. Successful action changes the unhappy into the hopeful mentality. As Whiting Williams puts it, 'We live our way into our thinking more than we think our way into our living.'

This practical attitude is the basis of social work. Is it sufficient? If it were it might be carried out automatically and perhaps better by machinery than by men. We do not believe this. We say that personality counts in social work. But why? There are two reasons.

First, because the difficulties with which social workers have to deal are only half material. Few people are the victims of mere misfortune. Almost always they are *victims* also of *imperfect ideas*. We might say that the subjects of social work are very largely those who are *unconvinced* by the ideas upon which our social order rests. Every civilization is built upon a set of beliefs. It depends upon convincing its members that it affords them a way of happiness, that it can interpret to them what they

want. Men's lives are governed by their beliefs, and among them beliefs about their own desires. They do not originally know what they want. But they cannot find their place in society unless they are convinced that it knows what they want. The criminal, as an extreme case of social misfit, is the thoroughly unconvinced individual. He finds his pleasure in a mode of life which certainly has a gamut of excitement and therewith a certain greatness not discoverable in the tame round of ordinary existence. There are others likewise unconvinced who suffer from a simple lack of motivation. They find nothing which commands the devotion of their whole will. They lack ambition. They suffer as a certain urchin was suffering who was kept after school by his teacher. Thinking to appeal to his ambition he was asked what he wanted to be when he grew up. His answer was: 'Nothing. What's the use? It's just work and work and work and then die.' This was probably a dramatic and borrowed pessimism, but there are those to whom such a lack of ambition is real. Nietzsche and Jesus were right. It is the desires, the values of men, that require to be revalued, energized and directed.

A second reason why physical relief is not sufficient is because taken alone it is not a certain good. Every social worker recognizes the doubtful value of material help. The dangers of altruism are an old story. 'Doing good' is something which certainly helps the giver but which may hurt the received. A

recent writer has expressed these well-known difficulties in pungent language. I will take the liberty of quoting some phrases from Count von Keyserling's 'Travel Diary of a Philosopher':

Altruism is not worth a farthing more than egoism; in fact it can be more corrupting in so far as it purchases the gain of the man who practises it at the expense of the disadvantage of many others. It is hardly possible to benefit another person without encouraging him in his selfishness; for such a man perceives that his selfish wishes are taken seriously, and this influence is corrupting. It makes him think first of all of his personal happiness, it makes it more difficult for him to become free, and everything depends on liberation alone. . . . One can be truly of use to others only by giving them an example. . . . And the Yogi who is beyond all earthly fetters, beyond labor and work, beyond egoism and altruism, beyond inclination and disinclination, presents the highest example of all. For this reason, his existence among men is more valuable than the life of the most useful of workers.

All eternal values have reference to Being, not to Performance; performance possesses real significance only in so far as it substantiates Being. The Westerners live for their work; with the result that their performances probably outstrip everything which has ever been done on earth; life, however, is the loser as never before. The more I see of the East, the more unimportant the type of the Westerner seems to me. He has abdicated his life in favor of a means to it — work.

Good actions benefit essentially only ourselves, not others. Any one who imagines that he is doing Goodness-knows-what in satisfying some sufferer professes that material well-being is the main essential.

These are candid and drastic words, and yet they do not touch the chief difficulty of benevolent

action, which is that it tends to rob the receiver of his highest right, namely, the right to give. So far as one is a receiver one is not a giver, and to be a man is to be in the position of a capacity to give. The main task of social work is to restore this human attitude of power rather than dependency. Is Keyserling then right in this criticism of the worker, particularly of the operator in social welfare?

No doubt we are dealing with a paradox, and Keyserling has seen a part of the truth, but certainly not the whole of the truth. The solution of the difficulty seems to me to have been indicated long ago in the attitude of the Founder of Christianity toward material aid. He insisted on being free from material anxiety for ourselves. He insisted equally upon attention to the material wants of others. They were to be fed if they were hungry, clothed if they were naked, ministered unto if they were sick or in prison. The giving of a cup of cold water was celebrated as a worthy act. And surely all of these are acts of attention to the physical man. But there was one addition to the requirement which has commonly been overlooked because of our lack of insight into its meaning. *The cup of cold water was to be given 'in the name' of something.* What is the meaning of this mysterious phrase? Perhaps we can take a clue from those who have the capacity of receiving benefit and receiving it unhurt. Children are necessarily habitual receivers. All of us are receivers of benefit from



nature, from society, and from our predecessors, and all this natural receiving is attended with no very pronounced sense of dependence or even of gratitude. It is what we might denominate 'natural receiving.' It is natural because we find that the sources from whom we receive find a portion of their life in the act of transmission, and that *they transmit with their material gifts their own sources of happiness; in brief, their philosophy.* They give in the name of whatever they have found best in the world, so that giving becomes a rite in which gratitude is dissolved in mutual joy.

It is an ancient saying, 'With all thy getting get understanding.' For the social worker perhaps this might be stated from the obverse side, 'With all thy giving give understanding.' If this is the fundamental aim of social work might it not be regarded as an essay in *education*?

I believe that a great deal of education actually takes place through social work, and I once was ready to use the word 'education' as a name for its essential aim. But I no longer think that this word is sufficient. For it would seem to require on the part of the social worker a superhuman wisdom, since the persons with whom he is dealing are those who have baffled the social resources for convincing, that is to say, the acquired wisdom of the race: they include certainly some of the oddest, that is to say, the most original, of mankind. It would follow from this view that no one has a right to do any social

work unless he has solved the problems of the universe. I think that most social workers would agree that a large part of the allurements of their task lies, not in what they have to teach, but in what they have to learn. They desire to become acquainted with their own social order on its defective side, and to appreciate the dark thoughts of unhappy men. It is not even the mission of the social worker to come to an economic crisis with a prepared remedy. For the difficulty may lie deep in the structure of the community, and he cannot afford to take the attitude of one who cries social peace when there is no peace. He does not come with a radical remedy, but he comes with the desire to feel at first hand what those conditions are which demand radical remedies and so to take the first step in discovering them.

He does not come, therefore, exclusively to teach; but he would not have any right in social work unless for himself he had found in life a source of satisfaction, unless he had won his own freedom in the universe, and unless he were prepared to communicate that philosophy, not so much in the form of definite propositions as through the silent interchange of personal attitude. It is for this reason that I use the form 'osmosis,' which implies the silent transmission of substance across barriers. This exchange of belief which brings about a new equilibrium in the small community of two is the main object of social work. If we wish to enlarge

the meaning of a common word, we might say the object of social work is material aid 'in the name of' conversation—the imparting and receiving of faith.

## THE ADVENTURE OF SPIRITUAL LIVING

BY ETHEL WARD DOUGHERTY

*Roxbury Neighborhood House*

I COME to this conference to preach a very simple gospel, but one which I feel is as important as it is simple, and which I bring to you from the community itself. It seems to me that no conference of social workers is complete without its message from the people of the neighborhood in which we work.

My definition of social work is, 'The science of adjusting people to life.' As social workers we are necessarily much concerned with concrete adjustments on the material side of life. This must be so, of course, but it should never blind us to the fact that the spiritual adjustments of life are even more important and bring the kind of help that people really crave. In the eyes of the neighborhood the concrete job is very much taken for granted. We are social workers. What else are we here for but to get Mary's teeth attended to, and Mrs. Smith's budget supplemented? But the spiritual adjustment, the undercurrent in our relationship that helps people to gain a different point of view in life—that is what really counts, and that is what people remember and carry with them long after bags of coal and bushels of potatoes and even you and I are forgotten.

For this reason we must always have in our daily work a double aim: first, the aim which the problem of the day itself brings, and second, the larger aim which should be always with us — the aim of *helping people in whatever way we may in the adventure of spiritual living*. This aim is a fundamental one in all our relationships in life, but just how can we as social workers carry it out in our work?

We all have a pet word which underlies our relationships to people. With many of us it is 'interpretation'; with some of us it is 'adjustment'; my own is '*enrichment*.' The Church enriches people's lives by the teaching of a religious faith which is fundamental to all happiness; the school enriches people's lives in a rather special form; but there is much education of the reënforcing kind that lies outside the formal limits of these two fields.

We live in a very material age when enrichment to many minds means more money, a Ford car parked in the back yard, a phonograph with a loud speaker to outdo the nextdoor neighbor's, a radio set, a this year's fur coat. There seems little need of any emphasis on material enrichment, but of real enrichment of mind and spirit, which comes from within and grows with the play of the imagination and with the broadening of one's outlook on life, there seems all too little.

Because I have learned from the community itself a point of view which has enriched many lives to the extent that it seems to have changed them



utterly, this is what I want to try to bring from them to you, so that we may all perhaps more consciously try *to tie up people's individual problems*, their joys and sorrows, their successes and their failures, *to the community life*. This point of view is of the more value in that it helps people to face facts. When in trouble the natural tendency of the weak is to run away; but psychologists and mental hygienists tell us that an ability to face life as it comes is an essential part of sane, healthy mental life; to face facts and to build on them or about them a philosophy which turns them, no matter how hard they may be, into a real adventure.

This is the same sort of enrichment which the drama gives people, because one of its first lessons is that no one can understand his part in the play except by understanding the whole and by seeing his part in its relationship to that whole. This helps the actor not only to play his part better, because he plays it, not as he himself interprets it, but as the play seems to interpret it, but also to put his stress on the play itself and not on the individual part. Thus small parts receive dignity and the best part is more important because of its relationship to the rest than because of its lines. The encouragement of this point of view has a third and very practical value: it works, as I think a few stories will show.

This was directly brought home to me not long since by one of my neighbors who has lived about as hard a life as any one I know. Ill health and a

drinking husband have combined to make her life thoroughly miserable on the surface. But underneath she had a sane, sweet nature, a great sense of humor, and a broad outlook. One night her husband was arrested. The arrest was the culmination of months of unhappiness and doubt as to whether it was the proper course to take. Finally the decision was made and she went through with it. After everything was over, late that same evening, at the end of what I suppose must have been about the bitterest day of her life, she laughed and said, 'Well, it's interesting, isn't it?'

'What is interesting?' I asked.

'Well, people's troubles,' she said. 'I suppose that my neighbors think that I live about the most sordid life of any one on this street, and in a way I do. But I can't help being kind of interested in myself, just as if I was a stranger to myself. And I can't help being interested in the probation system. I watch other people when they are in trouble, and I see little boys around here being put on probation, and I see men and women being put on probation, and I like to keep track of it, and read about it and see how it works, and, you know, I don't think it works very well. It's weak. I suppose it's because they have so many people to deal with. They can't pay enough attention to any one. They can't go into the details enough and they can't check up on everything that's said to them. It's a big problem and I suppose in time they'll work it

out, and we all have to help, and my job seems to be to furnish quite a bit of material.'

And that was the end of a tragic day — personal feelings softened and broadened by humor and wisdom and a real philosophy of life.

Years ago when I first lived in the neighborhood, the mother of a large and very happy family lived near by. She had, I felt, much to give to other people in the neighborhood. She was a splendid mother, she had a splendid husband. They were a musical family: the father played the cornet; all the older children sang, and some played the piano; one boy played the violin. They had a very happy, a very rich, and a very complete home life; but unfortunately for the neighborhood it was so complete that they felt no need for reaching out beyond it.

As director of the women's club of the neighborhood, I talked to the mother many times about joining us, trying to show her that she should share the happiness of her life with others; that she had a balanced point of view, as the result of a harmonious home, which would be a real help in a group where many came from homes which had none of the qualities that so enriched her own. But she was a busy mother and I made little impression. She felt that she was doing her duty to the community by bringing up her large family well, and that anyway she was too busy. I knew that she wasn't; for her children had passed the age when they required constant care, and I felt that her own life as well as

the lives of others would be enriched by the passing on of what she had in such abundance; but I could never convince her and she always ended up with the argument that I didn't know anything about it anyway because I hadn't tried bringing up a large family myself! At that point I generally retired.

This family very soon moved away into one of the outlying districts, and for ten years I saw almost nothing of them. Then suddenly a tragedy came into their lives. One of the daughters was in a top-story ward in a private hospital ill-provided with fire escapes. It caught fire and she was burned to death, though all the other patients were rescued. This terrible loss seemed so unnecessary, yet also seemed to point so conclusively to the fact that it was intended that she should lose it, that it brought the family to the realization that this girl's life had been sacrificed that other lives might become safer.

After the funeral I went to see the mother, expecting to find her utterly broken down under the blow, as I well knew how beloved the girl was and to what an extent the life of the mother was bound up in that of the child. The mother herself opened the door when I called. Her face lighted up and she said: 'I'm so glad to see you. You know I've thought a lot about you these last few days. I've thought a lot about how you used to try to get me to go to the club and to share my happiness with other people. Well, I guess I was too happy — it made me selfish. I used to think that I did the

whole of my job by bringing up my family as best I could, but now I see I was wrong. You couldn't teach it to me, I was too contented. It took life to teach it to me, or death you might say, because now I can see that if any one's life had to be sacrificed to make conditions safer for other people, it was only fair it should be one of us. For we've just lived along, so happy that we never thought of sharing it with others. I wish I lived back on Albany Street. I'd join the club; I know I have lots to share. But I can't go backwards, so I guess I'll have to get out and find out more about my own community right here, and do what I can to help.'

It isn't always hardship or sorrow that brings the person to this point of view. For some people happiness brings it equally. The morning of the day I went on my vacation I dropped in to see a neighbor who had a two-weeks-old baby. The children had told me with joy of the advent of 'Mary Maud.' In response to my knock Mrs. Smith herself opened the door.

'Well, how are you?' I greeted her.

'Oh, I feel fine,' she answered. 'Some people think it's a disgrace to feel well after they've had a baby, but I feel just fine. You know I think I'm a genius at babies. I just love them, and when the family is a little larger we seem to be able to get along and to give our children just as many advantages as we did when the family was smaller. You know,' she said, 'I often wonder just what I'm



doing for the neighborhood, but I guess that the best I have to give to it right now anyway is my children, because they're children that live in a happy home; they're every one of them welcomed when they come into the world and they're all loved and taken care of, and they'll be sent out into the world with as good principles behind them as their father and I can teach them. And right now while they're small and I have to stay at home, I guess that's my job in the neighborhood. Don't you want to see the baby? She's a darling!

One of the dearest friends I ever had in the neighborhood died a few years ago after a long illness. During her life she was a real joy to all her friends. and neighbors. She was a much-loved member of the club and a real help in concrete ways as well as a general inspiration. As her illness progressed and she became confined to her own home, she was constantly and lovingly tended by her many friends. She was particularly fond of picture puzzles, and somebody once brought her a very difficult one over which she worked for days.

One day when I went in to see her she greeted me with the words, 'I've got the idea.'

'What idea?' I asked.

'Oh, you know, that community idea that you're always talking about. I used to think I had it, but now I've got it more.'

'Where did you get it?' I laughed. 'Evidently not from me.'



‘Well,’ she said, ‘no, I didn’t get it from you, that is, not directly, but I suppose you prepared the ground. I got it from this picture puzzle. See, it’s done! This morning when I started to do it, suddenly it came over me that every time I started, I had a habit of beginning with this one special piece because it attracted my attention. I liked the color. So this time I just put that piece aside and I started hit or miss just anywhere, and you know by the time I got quite a lot of it done that favorite piece of mine got into place almost without my knowing it. I guess life’s like that,’ she said shyly. ‘The trouble is we keep our minds too much on the piece that’s ourselves. If we’d keep our minds on the whole of it, we’d just fit in naturally without worrying about it.’

There are days when it takes great courage to be a social worker. Sometimes in trying to carry out the ideas in which we so strongly believe, we get discouraged at the very sound of our own voices. We see few results and we wonder whether there are any. But it seems to me we often expect too much. I like to think of that old friend of mine and remember that keeping the ground prepared is half the battle. It may be the seed that we sow or the seed that somebody else sows that will finally take root in it, but if we prepare the ground faithfully, and with faith, the seed will surely be sown and some one will reap the harvest, though we may never know of it.

I have tried to give you a bit of my own philosophy of life interpreted through the neighborhood, but lest you should think I consider it the only philosophy I'll end with the story of the Scotchman who was a strong fundamentalist. One night he attended a religious meeting at which a discussion arose on 'Fundamentalism vs. Liberalism.' The Scotchman in advocating fundamentalism told the following story:

'Once there were two brothers who went out on a lake in a boat. The first brother believed every word of his Bible literally. The second brother put a liberal construction on his. While the brothers were out in the boat, a storm arose on the lake, and finally the boat was capsized. And' — the Scotchman spoke slowly and impressively — 'the brother who believed his Bible literally was saved.'

There was a silence. The Scotchman sat down and another speaker got to his feet. While this man was talking the Scotchman became rather fidgety and was evidently anxious to say more. At the first pause in the conversation he arose again and added reluctantly but firmly, 'I feel bound to say that the other brother was saved too.'

# THE GOAL OF SOCIAL WORK IN INDUSTRY

BY ELLIOTT DUNLAP SMITH

*Dennison Manufacturing Company, Framingham*

TO-DAY, more than ever before, industry has become a field of social work. Much of this work is done from without by social workers, but increasingly social work in American industry is being done from within by industrial workers.

What is the aim of all this social work? Is there one aim or many? Are the social workers outside the factory and the industrial workers dealing with the social problem from within engaged in a common undertaking?

As I view the situation, all this work does have a common purpose: the purpose of bringing about the conduct of industry in such a way and under such conditions that the fundamental desires of men — the vital forces that are the mainsprings of their action — will seek and will find the fullest possible expression and satisfaction in the service of industry.

## I

Let me explain a little more fully what I mean. There seem to be, among all people that one comes in contact with in industry here, certain common, certain deep-seated propensities or desires which

constitute the basis of their conduct. To suggest more specifically the forces I am referring to, let me enumerate those which in my experience seem to be the more important fundamental desires of the men and women engaged in New England industry. These are:

1. Self-support — including, of course, the support of one's family.
2. Self-respect, the respect, and, if possible, the emulation of others.
3. Self-expression.
4. Justice.

This enumeration does not purport to be exact — it does not purport to be complete: but merely to suggest the type of human forces that I refer to as seeking satisfaction in industry.

While these fundamental desires are common, and thus apparently inherent and difficult to modify, the forms in which they express themselves vary widely depending upon the individual and the habits he has formed through experience. Thus, I have known many employees and managers who have sought to satisfy the desire for self-support by honest effort, and some others who have sought to satisfy the same desire by fraud or exploitation. With some managers I have seen the desire for the respect or emulation of others seeking expression in acquiring and expending wealth; in others in rendering service to the community through the high quality and low price of their product, or the fine-

ness of their industrial relations. With some employees I have seen this desire for the respect of others find satisfaction primarily in conspicuous loafing before their fellows without getting caught by 'the boss'; and in others find expression in the high quality of their workmanship.

So with the other life-urges, one comes to realize that however common they are and however difficult to change, their form of expression is fully capable of change and development. One comes to realize also that it is through the proper direction of these urges, more than any other means, that we can bring about effectiveness on the part of labor, economically and socially adequate control on the part of management, and a wholesome industrial relationship between employees and managers.

This brief explanation will perhaps have made more clear what I am seeking to express when I say that the purpose of social work in industry in New England is and should be to bring about the conduct of industry in such a manner and under such conditions that those engaged in industry will seek and find the fullest possible expression of their fundamental desires in the service of industry.

## II

This statement of purpose is conspicuously wanting in any reference to the great present-day social problems. It says nothing of wages, collective bargaining, hours, working conditions, unemploy-

ment, employee representation, and yet does it not include their solution? Will working men seek the full satisfaction of their fundamental cravings in industry until industry has honestly sought and, to a large degree, found the solution of these specific problems? Can a working man find the full satisfaction of his desire for self-support, or self-respect, or justice, in an industry that pays him unjustly, that without serious effort to prevent or relieve his disaster and without fault on his part throws him out of work at the first signs of business depression, and that decides industrial questions vital to his happiness without giving him a voice in the decision, directly or by representation? Can he find satisfaction of his craving for self-expression in an industry that reduces his work to a process as repetitive as that of a machine? And can the type of men who are more and more working as managers find adequate expression of their urges for self-respect or for justice — or even for the respect of such of their fellows whose respect they value — unless they utilize the strategic position which is theirs to work for the solution of these vital social problems? This statement of purpose thus includes the solution of the great social problems of industry, not only as material, but as spiritual problems. For it seeks their solution in terms of the satisfaction of the inner forces of man, in terms of making the industrial relationship a satisfactory expression of the character of industrial workers.



## III

By stating the aim of social work in terms of an active relationship to be attained and maintained, not in terms of specific accomplishment, that aim is made dynamic and as such adapted to the intensely dynamic character of industry to-day. Machines that were the last word in engineering perfection ten or twenty years ago may be obsolete to-day. Chemical and manual processes are changing with equal speed. Not only do these changes affect the human problem, but personnel, technique, and conditions are changing even more rapidly. The average foreman who has worked up to his position from the bottom knows that if he treated his employees in the same crude way that he was 'bossed' when he was a 'hand,' he would lose his job. Most important has been the change in the employees themselves. Their fundamental desires are the same, but they are expressing themselves in wholly new standards of wages, hours, working conditions, and self-respect. In such a dynamic condition to set a static goal is dangerous. For a specific accomplishment or end that is adequate to guide and inspire our actions to-day may, if we continue to look on it as an end, soon become an anchor preventing further progress. In industry, whether we consider it from the angle of production or social progress, change is too rapid to permit of accepting any end as a goal. Each 'end' must be looked on as a means, as a step in the ful-

filling and evolving of a dynamic purpose. So I believe that it is better, in trying to define the purpose of social work in industry, not to refer to specific problems, measures, or ends; but to speak dynamically of a relationship of the industrial worker — be he manager or employee — to industry and to consider all particular measures as means by which this relationship may be improved. If such a statement does nothing else, it at least forces us to realize that the particular measures that seem so important to us now are not ends in themselves, but should always be considered solely in respect to their contribution to the more fundamental and dynamic purpose of social work.

## IV

The purpose which I have suggested for social work in industry not only thus comprehends the solution of ever-changing social problems — it makes the purpose of social work in industry contributory to the purpose of industry itself. One of the major problems of industry — to-day, in my opinion, the major problem — is enlisting in the service of industry the full measure of interest and effort of the employees, not the least the managerial employees. So often industry stimulates among its workers antagonism — not interest — an attitude of ‘your harm our gain’ toward the particular concern. So often it stimulates among management an attitude of graft, politics, or other form of

fraud instead of one of service. The more efficient our machines and methods, the more rapidly can such an attitude lead to waste. Clearly, then, if social work in dealing with the human element in industry includes in its purpose the enlistment in industrial service of the fundamental desires of all engaged in industry, this purpose contributes both to the welfare of industry and to the survival value of each individual industrial concern.

This may seem an incidental or even a doubtful blessing — but as I see it, it is fundamental. In the first place, it means that social progress in industry will contribute to the welfare and not be at the expense of the consuming public. If the attitude of people toward their pocketbooks in the past is any indication of the future, this should have a considerable influence upon the public support social work in industry will receive. In the second place, it means that social work can look to the assistance of industry and especially of management. Management is in a strategic position to influence social welfare in industry. Indeed, without the coöperation of management, the most vital steps in social progress cannot be made. Compulsion by law is a poor substitute for coöperation — especially with the present relative success of lawyers in contriving ways of law-breaking as compared to their success in contriving laws that cannot be broken.

Hence, if the purpose of social work in industry involves examining the measures that are taken to

see how they can be made contributory to the welfare of industry, we have set a purpose that carries in its wake the possibility of the most effective means of fulfillment, the coöperation of management. Further than that we have set a purpose that comprehends enduring progress in social betterment because that progress will be economically sound and thus not subject to violent reaction in those times of economic distress when all measures not contributory to industrial survival are abandoned.

## V

The purpose of social work in industry as I have phrased it puts a still more important requirement upon those engaged in this work. In order that any such purpose shall be fulfilled, the method of expression or satisfaction of the fundamental urges of industrial workers must, as the basis of fulfillment, be moulded by experience and education so that they will seek ends that are contributory not only to the welfare of industry, but to the social welfare of all engaged in it. This remoulding of specific desire — this education of purpose by experience — is particularly important in regard to management, if for no other reason because management is in a position most effectively to influence the progress of social welfare in industry. In no other way can the operation of industry under conditions bringing about the fullest possible satisfaction of

the life forces of industrial workers be brought about.

Our purpose is thus essentially educational. As each step forward is taken, if our purpose is to be served fully, the step — the experience — must educate us to seek higher aims which this step made possible. Our purpose thus includes a constant redirecting of desire through the education of experience. Thus, in every step that we take in social work, we must look to be sure that the step is taken in such a way as to make the experience which the measure brings about of the greatest possible educational value.

Perhaps a specific instance will make more clear what I mean. One of the great social problems to-day is unemployment. The obvious means of solving it is unemployment insurance. So long as unemployment continues to be as serious an evil as it is to-day, insurance is at least one of the measures that deserves consideration. But before going ahead and urging any scheme of unemployment insurance, should we not consider its educational effect? If unemployment insurance is given generally by the State as was done in England, will it tend to make industrial managers see more clearly the extent to which unemployment is an industrial and a social evil and the responsibility which rests on them to curtail unemployment because of the opportunity that is theirs to do so? Will it cause labor to discover what its relationship toward un-



employment should be and to find ways in which it can work toward its reduction? Can not unemployment relief be given in some way that will have greater educational value? Can each industry and each concern be made to bear the cost of its own unemployment as it has been made to bear the cost of industrial accidents? Some industries have already undertaken this self-education voluntarily. Should a certain share be borne by the worker concerned? What, in a word, is the effect of the proposed measure in remoulding the habits of those engaged in industry so that their fundamental urges will seek satisfaction in ways contributory to the solution of this social problem?

If you agree with me that the purpose of social work in industry is to bring about an industrial relationship under which the fundamental desires of manager and worker will seek and find the fullest possible satisfaction in the service of industry, then each social action or end will be examined: first, as a means toward the material and spiritual welfare of those engaged in industry, not as an end in itself, especially not a material end; second, as to whether it is made as contributory as possible to the welfare of industry, and above all, as to its educational effect upon those most able to influence industrial welfare. Indeed, it is perhaps unnecessary to endeavor to formulate a goal for social work apart from these standards of testing each social measure — leaving these standards to present our purpose, as cases present our common law.



Certainly it is the assumption of such an attitude in the social work we do in industry that is fundamental rather than any statement of aim. Here as elsewhere, actions speak not only louder but more clearly than words.

#### SUMMARY

1. The goal of social work in industry must be consistent with the goal of industry itself. It must also be identical whether the social work is accomplished from without or within.
2. The goal of social work in industry is to bring about the conduct of industry in such a way and under such conditions that the fundamental desires of men; such as the desires for self-support, self-respect, the respect of others, justice, and self-expression, will seek and find their full satisfaction in the service of the industry.
  - a. This goal states nothing directly in regard to wages, care of older employees, unemployment, working conditions, etc., but the fundamental desires of men cannot find full expression in the service of industry unless industry is conducted so as to solve these problems. Examples: Unemployment — fear — employee representation — conflict.
  - b. This goal is primarily a state of education — of being habituated to certain

methods and aims of management and of work: habits of seeking self-support through service and not through deception or extortion; of seeking emulation through service and genuine worth and not through display or sham; of seeking justice broadly and in common rights of all and not blindly the rights of a group or class; of seeking self-expression and self-respect in successful contribution to the general good rather than in success in conflict.

It is important to remember that the goal of social work in industry comprehends the education of the manager as much if not more than any work directly relating to the employee.

- c. Such a goal is not inconsistent with the goal of industry, and, in addition to the welfare of people in industry, comprehends the welfare of the whole community. For this goal is a goal which comprehends efficiency through bringing the best out of all employees.

Even subordinate ends should be tested by their relationship to efficiency, for usually the two can be brought together by searching and contrivance, and if efficiency is overlooked, the progress is not likely to be permanent.

- d.* This goal is a dynamic thing — not a static goal — because the changing conditions of industry and society will require the constant reintegration of industrial methods and motives and thus constant re-education of the desires and working habits of all engaged in industry whether as managers or as employees.



### PART III

#### THE GOAL OF SOCIAL WORK FOR THE AGED





## THE SOCIAL WORKER'S QUEST

BY ANNIE LOCKHART CHESLEY

*The First Parish Paine Fund, Cambridge*

It takes a great deal of courage for a professional social worker to do what I have been asked to do this evening. It means breaking through some of our conventional habits of reticence about the inner purposes that spur us on through difficulties and failures and give us confidence, at times at least, in the creative power of our efforts. We all know that this confidence, or inner assurance, which we feel about our work is based on what we have learned through practical experience in working with others. We know that, now and then, a person whose life has been submerged, or partly submerged, by poverty and tribulation, catches glimpses, nevertheless, of the moral and spiritual values of his lot and communicates them to us. So we try to put at the service of others not only community resources but the results of our own and others' experience, helping, not as beings apart, but as members of this great common life of humanity.

I have taken as my keynote these words from a paper by Lorin F. Deland:

'It is a finer thing to make a human being fit for liberty than to set him free.'

Is not the social worker's quest to find and touch

the thing that makes men fit for liberty? This is no new endeavor. Social work has been going forward whenever, through the ages, men have tried to understand and help each other. As a professional group, we have made only a beginning. We need to go on trying to understand, to integrate, to interpret, to adjust, and finally, through coöperative effort, to make this world a little better place in which to live.

How hard and discouraging the road is that we have marked out for ourselves to travel, only others with vision can know. Only they can understand, too, that we are not as the blind leading the blind, because we are working with, not against, the forces of the universe. Tyndall says in his 'Fragments of Science,' 'Through the swing of the ideal we often arrive at the naked truth more rapidly than by the direct processes of the understanding.' This is impressively true. Building on material facts alone is like building a house and calling it a home, when there is no family life within. We need to use our intuitions, our imaginations, and our ideals.

What is our vision of the secret of that which makes men fit for liberty? Are we chasing a phantom that is sometimes almost within our grasp and then again is lost in the darkness? Not so. We have an inner confidence that gives us promise that we are on the right path, because we are trying to put the foundations under our dreams. For we know that visions alone can never do the work.

In order to show the development of the idea I

have in mind, I find it is necessary to tell a little of my own experience, even though there is nothing special or unusual about it. What is known as social case work has always been my principal field. I began my training in old Ward 8 of what is now the Family Welfare Society of Boston. Miss Mary Birtwell was the district secretary, and Dr. Charles P. Putnam was the president of the conference. I have never known finer ideals of technique to be held by any other group. I was thoroughly drilled in the necessity of investigation, family responsibility, coöperation, and the ideals of the friendly visitor. I was taught how to work with churches; also, that after clients have been referred to their churches, all spiritual teaching must come from them. I grew to understand their point of view of the old slogan, 'Not alms, but a friend.' It must be remembered that this was over thirty years ago when the great necessity was to impress the community with the value of investigation and registration, and to teach clients that their own self-respect could be fostered only by depending as far as possible on their own resources. Most earnest study was given to each client, and each was brought into touch with all community privileges. But let me confess what I have never acknowledged before — that these dignified and reserved members of the conference appalled me by what they hoped would be accomplished in the lives of others without giving any definite instruction as to how the deeper

springs of life might be touched. I was shy with them then, and I feel that I should be now. They were so wise, they were really so kind; but their respect for the poor was so great that they held them to almost impossible standards — or so it seemed to me as I went into the homes of the poor in the West End of Boston. I now realize that they probably knew that students must be left to learn for themselves from their own experience with others. It might be dangerous to try even to suggest methods, for there are so many avenues to human understanding. They must have realized too that they were accomplishing much by teaching the newly applied technique of social case work.

I went on doing something, I trust, to help 'adjust' lives in all the orthodox ways, always having, however, a vague sense of something wanting, always feeling that more should be expected of a social worker than I was trying to give. The following very simple story will perhaps illustrate what I mean.

Before Miss Hutchins became a probation officer in Cambridge, Judge Almy asked me to take under my care a bright girl of seventeen who had been complained of as wayward and impossible to keep off the streets at night. Katie was living with an elderly grandmother, to whose restrictions she paid no heed. We became very good friends. She was pretty, vivacious, enticing. She found it very dull at home, and naturally she loved the gay badinage of the boys and girls who were walking at night

through Central Square. I persuaded her to join a girls' club in a Neighborhood Center. She found it stupid and dropped out. She had become a member of a Protestant church at the age of fourteen, but had given up going to Sunday School. I saw the Sunday School teacher, and Katie consented to return. Her teacher was a medieval saint. She welcomed Katie, but had grave fears that she would contaminate the class, and evidently labored too hard to impress her during the lessons with the necessity of righteous living. Katie stopped going. Her proud, unregenerate spirit could not stand all the morals of the lesson applied to herself. The end of her probation period was near. I was in despair and told her I must report to the court that she had not improved. Then quite spontaneously I happened to add, 'You will probably live on, Katie, adding to the evil in the world instead of the good.'

Quick as a flash, she said, 'I never thought of that. Just what do you mean?'

I told her, without mentioning God or religion, what one of the aims of our lives should be. It was very interesting to see her at once apply the thought. 'I should make my grandmother happier instead of keeping her worrying,' she said. 'But it is not right to stay in the house all the time.'

'No,' I said, 'but accept your own responsibility. Choose your companions and try to keep to innocent good times.'

Later she came in to tell me that she had gone



back to Sunday School. 'You know,' she said, 'Miss D. is an awfully good woman, and I feel that she can help me.' I do not know just why this simple remark had such an effect, unless for an instant she caught a glimpse of the dignity and value of her own life.

It seemed to me then and since that if a chance remark concerning a serious aim in life could so affect a frivolous young girl, we ought not to shrink from making it a part of the day's work to study the *inner* lives of clients as well as the material forces that effect their outer lives. From that time, I think, I gave more serious attention to trying to ascertain what men are really thinking and 'living by.' I found that we could not wait for the churches to do all this side of our work. To many of our clients, the Church was an institution, and much depended on their former relations to their priest or clergy. Many had no church connection. It seemed necessary first to *stimulate their desire* for the help the Church might give. On the other hand, we often needed to distract church representatives away from the reforming instinct — for who wants to be reformed? — and to have them give at first just a welcome and a sense of the good fellowship that comes through natural human relations.

I have grown to value slight results, not expecting too much from clients or from the Church, realizing through my own experiences how slow a process it is to develop a real purpose. Many psychological opportunities for this side of our work come to us



through daily connections, but more often through long years of contact. I realize more and more that we lose many vast opportunities when we take the stand that to the Church belongs all the responsibility of serious suggestion. With few exceptions, I have found the clergy most eager to accept all the help and stimulation that we can give and always willing, too, to give to us the benefit of their attitudes toward life and an interpretation of what they consider of value in their own special forms of doctrine and church duties. I always think with gratitude of the practical and spiritual counsels of two or three Catholic priests, as well as others of all faiths. I have discovered no rule or formula, and have no creed. Indeed, all my fundamentalist friends have grave doubts of my ultimate salvation; but we go on working side by side, with a confidence in each other, bred of comradeship in effort.

All political platforms and organizations have what they call a bottom plank on which to stand. Ought not social workers to have as a bottom plank in case work some philosophy of life, or, to use Lucy Wright's favorite expression, some fundamental 'attitude' toward life underlying all their religions and creeds?

Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean to imply that we should always be talking ideals — far from it. I remember the words of an old friend who was passing through an avalanche of hard happenings, to whom I very inopportunately said, 'I have a

vision of how we might meet these conditions.' And she replied, 'I do not want to hear it. *This* is no time for visions.' I remember, too, calling to see a friend who was obliged to move to a place not at all suited to her needs. She told me of a well-meaning friend who had talked with her an hour about the best way to meet her trouble. The climax came when the friend told her that it did not make any difference where she lived, for heaven was within. 'I was then ready,' she added, 'to tell her to leave the house.'

After all, what we need to study are the elements that tend to human strength—those that sustain healthy, normal outlooks on life, those that enable people to live through hard conditions not as martyrs but as conquerors. For to take the hard things of life without a sense of egotistical rebellion requires all the philosophy of the stoics, all the religion of the saints, plus all available common sense. In addition, we need the conviction expressed in Browning's *Paracelsus*:

Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise  
 From outward things, whate'er you may believe.  
 There is an inmost centre in us all,  
 Where truth abides in fulness; and around,  
 Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,  
 This perfect, clear perception — which is truth,  
 A baffling and perverting carnal mesh  
 Binds it, and makes all error: and to *Know*  
 Rather consists in opening out a way  
 Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,  
 Than in effecting entry for a light  
 Supposed to be without.

Social workers find their work with the young very stimulating, because it provides so many opportunities for the preventive and educational side of life. But might not more be done to give the young an attitude toward life such as would help them to meet the problems, not only of youth, but of middle life and old age as well? Our little lives are at best so brief that if ideals capable of becoming qualities of character are not inculcated in youth, life will become barren indeed as the years pass. The tragedy comes because of our own limited understanding of what is needed.

Dr. Crothers writes<sup>1</sup> of the development of the child born in a world of realities. The child first distinguishes between light and darkness. Then a friendly face is recognized, and the first comprehension of the mystery of love comes:

'With the swift years the revealing goes on. Practical wisdom is revealed through labor. The knowledge of natural law comes through experiment. The moral law is revealed to the growing conscience. Sympathy comes with the experience of sorrow. Knowledge comes only as the mind has been prepared to receive it. It cannot come otherwise. First there is the seeking, then by slow degrees the finding, and the seeking itself is an essential part of the revelation. It is an educative process, and not a magical transformation scene. Its purpose is not to relieve our anxieties but to strengthen and purify our natures.

God may not have revealed eternal life through some

<sup>1</sup> In his "Ingersoll Lecture on Immortality."

miracle which makes doubt impossible. Neither has He so revealed the laws of health, or the motions of the planets, or the fundamental principles of art, or the ideals of true statesmanship. Yet all these things are being revealed through the development of humanity. It is a marvelous series of discoveries.'

The work with delicate, middle-aged people and with the old seems to many to be chiefly palliative. It seems to consist mostly in providing care suitable to their standards of life in their own homes, with family or friends, in nurses' homes, or in private or public institutions. To make all these adjustments is a marvelous achievement. But do we not need to stop occasionally, amidst the whirl of our busy days, and consider whether we are giving intelligent, sympathetic understanding to the mental and spiritual requirements of those who have passed their youth? The old have a hard part to play when contemporaries are passing away and all about them is change and removal. They are not so cynical of youth as is supposed. They are eager to let the young have their day, but they do not want to be rushed off the face of the earth. If they have lived and reflected at all — and I know of no old people who have not — they have much to pass on.

To say that we should meet the challenge of life as a great adventure has become hackneyed, but it is one way forward. To continue to feel this challenge when the charm of the novelty of life has worn off, when everything seems deadly dull, and the best of life seems over, is a test indeed.

It has been observed that when a man is poor and wretched, his soul grows tender and receptive. He does not shrink from some sincere word concerning the helpfulness of an attitude of acceptance toward conditions that may not be changed to his liking. There is my friend suffering from an incurable heart disease which causes great difficulty in breathing whenever she moves about. Everything had been done for her in the way of medical treatment, and she knew she was facing months — perhaps years — of suffering before the end came. She was a most conscientious woman with strong religious convictions, but was rebellious over her condition and claimed that she could not bear suffering on top of poverty and dependence. I tried to give her what were to her three new points of view:

*First*, that she should recognize God's bounty in providing means for her support and care, and that her self-respect was in no wise lessened, because through all the previous sixty-five years of her life she had earned her own way. Now she was given the opportunity to make the most of what might be a brief time here, as a source of happiness to herself and inspiration to others.

*Secondly*, that she should try to accept conditions not as from God, as she was probably suffering from the results of broken health laws.

And *lastly*, that she should try to cultivate a sense of freedom by not being afraid of consequences even after a spasm came when she walked about her room.



For weeks after the conversation, we did not refer to these points again. One day she began to explain to me her own fundamentalist beliefs, and I found that these points had become interwoven in the fabric of her thought. She now felt, with a new sense of freedom, that she was better prepared to meet the second coming of Christ, which she daily anticipated. She was applying her religion in a wholesome way to the daily routine of her life. Now, at the end of six months, she is physically better and apparently much happier. She is interested in daily happenings and ambitious concerning the little work she can do.

The different periods of life have their attitudes: the aspirations of youth, the accomplishments of middle life, the fruition of the last years. Joyce Kilmer says,

The young poet screams forever  
About his sex and his soul;  
But the old man listens, and smokes his pipe,  
And polishes its bowl.

But the old man knows that he's in his chair  
And that God's on his throne in the sky,  
So he sits by the fire in comfort  
And he lets the world spin by.

Even though the old may sit by the fire in comfort and let the world spin by, they may have too, if they will, a never-ending interest in fresh points of view and the zigzag progress of the world. They want to see the game played, even though they take no active part.



I should like to emphasize for those who are just beginning their life-work not only the importance of scientific technique, the importance of understanding the material framework of communities and human lives, but also the necessity of building on the basis of our faith that there is something in men that glorifies the struggle for existence, that moral force is the fundamental force of the world, that happiness is dependent more on our inner attitude than on external circumstances.

Again I ask: What is the social worker's quest? One friend said it was to her the search for beauty. Others said they aimed to understand or to help adjust and to correlate results for the common good. Arthur Christopher Benson says, 'To speak and feel sincerely, to encourage rather than condemn, to serve with blitheness — that is the secret.' A friend writes: 'A social worker's motive is a love even like the Master's own, which appeals to the self-respect in others where perhaps only a tiny atom existed. It makes two blades of grass grow in the place of one — not as an agriculturist, but as a humanitarian who bases his work on scientific knowledge and an ever-growing consciousness of the bonds of human relationships.'

All these are surely part of our quest. Life has many angles. Should we not first try to create the attitude of mind through which the truth that not only prepares men for liberty but sets them free can be manifested? Has not our quest been what the

seers, poets, and prophets of all ages have realized in part and labored to teach to mankind? Because we are afraid, and because we see such a little way ahead in our quest along the winding, uphill road of human progress, let us not be discouraged. For each generation sees a little farther. We need to remember too that 'quest,' not 'conquest,' is our aim.

Shall we then say that our real quest is to find the life of God in the souls of men, each of us helping in his own way to remove various obstacles, so that the doors of the kindred soul may be open to the inner vision?

## WHEN WINTER COMES

BY CHRISTINE MCLEOD

*Home for Aged Men, Boston*

### I. WHAT IS THE WINTER OF LIFE?

WHAT thought does it bring to our mind? Why do we picture age as the cold years with no pleasure in them?

The arc of life contains three segments. The first is the sunrise, the age of infancy, of childhood, of dependency. The last segment is the sunset hour, in which man slowly declines. Between these comes the high noon of life, when our physical and mental powers are at their best. It is the period of self-support, when a man establishes a home and rears a family. From this central segment he must reach out to the whole gamut of his life. Middle life looks both ways, carrying upon its shoulders the dependent child and holding out the hand of filial support to old age, which faces the setting sun.

What is old age? Is it a definite getting-off place when certain years are reached? In our charities and trusts we speak of old age as beginning at sixty-five years or at seventy years. But do we not know people who are old at forty and others who are young at eighty? I have in mind a man, young in spirit at eighty-seven, who went to New Hampshire for a vacation, and promptly applied for a license to go

fishing. 'How old are you?' shouted the official through the ear trumpet. 'Well,' the old fellow replied, 'I can tell you I'm not nearly so old as I expect to be.'

Old age is not a question of years. It is relative to the life-energy of each individual. The winter of old age comes when advancing years and decline render the individual unable longer to carry the burden of self-support and he must look to others for care and support in his second dependency. Has our attitude toward old age covered it with a blanket of winter? Have we neglected old age because we have thought of it as a period of expiring hopes, the period when the sun is going down, not with an afterglow, but in a bank of cloud?

The problem of the aged is a major one in social life. How shall we meet it? Among primitive peoples instances are known when the aged who could no longer produce, could no longer fish or hunt or take their places with the fighting men, have been put to death. Shall we do the same with our helpless aged? Christianity says NO. I remember hearing the story of the missionary who, with his bride, went five hundred miles from civilization, into the heart of the Canadian North-west, many years ago, among the Indians. They had been known to put their aged people to death. When the story of Christianity was brought to them, the sons came gently, the missionary told us, bringing an aged mother in their arms, to hear the story of the Gospel.

And when her back tired, because there were only benches, the sons would stand behind her and support her weak back with their hands.

'Honor thy father and thy mother' has been read into our lives and become a part of them. It is the constant impulse of civilized man to place a supporting hand on the weak back of the aged.

## II. MASS-CARE AND INDIVIDUAL CARE

The first action of the generous-minded, when confronted with the problem of the aged, was to build Homes for the Aged. Such Homes presented elements of stability, of comfort and of permanency. What could be better than to bring together the aged within four walls, with regular hours, regular meals, warmth. It was obvious and comparatively easy to arrange. But the fact that these aged people were being taken from their own accustomed environment was not considered. A forester would not think of tearing up an old tree by the roots, digging a hole and setting it in there with the expectation that it would keep on growing because there was more sunshine or space. No; we all know that an old tree must be moved very carefully. But little thought has been given to the taking of old people away from all the associations and habits in which their roots are firmly placed.

We have given little thought to the individual. The institutional idea has held. Funds have been tied to institutions. And bequests are held down

to-day because of this 'projection of the dead hand.' In the field of child-care a revolution in method has taken place. Are we to undergo this change of method in our work with the aged? We have dealt with individuals in the mass. Even our school life has been based upon age. Now we are learning that we are individual from childhood through old age, and that individuals should be considered according to their individual qualities and needs. This progress in thought needs fuller application to the care of our aged people to-day.

Homer Folks writes — in answer to the question 'What do the aged want?' — that they desire not to be set apart as being aged; they want to be let alone and allowed to manage their own affairs; to be allowed to stay where they have been living, if possible in the same circle or environment; and to occupy themselves in the kind of work to which they have been accustomed, as long as they can. And he asks if our whole system of caring for the aged would not be enormously more useful if all the funds now tied to institutions were available for the support of the aged according to their individual needs rather than on a fixed plan. This question is now being given careful thought in many places.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Massachusetts has developed an elaborate system of outdoor relief. New Bedford, Massachusetts, does placing out with its aged people entirely. The Home for Aged Women and the Home for Aged Colored Women in Boston give pensions to help maintain old people outside any institution. The Board of Masonic Relief states, in its report, that because old people are happier among their own people and friends, it is the fixed policy of the Board to give outside relief to



But it is becoming realized in many quarters that the problem of the aged is not a simple one which can be happily settled by admission to any Home. Homes for the Aged seem simple and easily managed. On the other hand, allowances paid to old people living in families or by themselves involve many difficulties of discrimination, of personal attention, and of consideration for the views which Society holds as to how much they should receive. At best, the private Homes can select but a few congenial, reasonably healthy, self-respecting persons out of the large number of applicants. And in many public institutions the aged have none of their treasured possessions, nothing but a bed and a chair, with the lonely years stretching ahead, away from all their old associations and remaining friends. And yet, we all treasure our little possessions. Many have associations far beyond their values, and for that reason are dear to us. Should we not consider the preferences of the aged themselves? Shall many of them be left without any care because the community cannot deal with them in their Homes?

the aged, whenever possible, using Homes only in cases of absolute physical necessity.

Cleveland, Ohio, has made an extensive survey of care for the aged. In that city the plan of giving monthly pensions to needy, aged people, under the terms of the will of Benjamin Rose, has proved so satisfactory, after the ten years' trial stipulated in the will, that it has been unanimously voted by the trustees not to erect a Home, as the will permitted, but to continue outside aid. A study directed by Miss Lucile Eaves, 'Aged Clients of Boston Social Agencies,' has just been published, and the Massachusetts Commission on Old Age Pensions is in process of reporting.

The Home for Aged Men, in Boston, was incorporated in 1860, by a group of representative men, men with a vision. A clause in the application for a charter states that 'this corporation is formed to aid such persons as they find to be worthy objects of such a charity, *either at the residence of the beneficiary or in the institution above named, as the necessities of each case may, in their opinion, seem to require.*' This splendid group of men realized the suffering that would be caused by the breaking-up of the home, and the separation of the aged man from his family and his old associations. In the sixty-five years since its incorporation the Home has cared for 463 men in the institution and for over 600 outside it.

There are many aged people who are of *the institutional type*. Mr. Bardwell mentions: those unable to care for themselves through physical handicap, the mentally senile, and the 'cantankerous' or unplaceable type. These are not generally admitted to the private Homes, however.

I have in mind other institutional types: (1) The aged who lose their own homes when too old to adjust themselves to new environment where they must plan for themselves. For example, an aged man who had lived in the same house for fifty years, and was left alone at the age of eighty-seven. For him, and for many like him, a Home, with its warmth and companionship, and no cares for the future, would make the stronger appeal than provision outside an institution. (2) Another type is

the aged person without relatives, who loves to be with many people, who is friendly with every one, and is keenly interested in all the small details which make up the life of an institution. These are institutional types.

But if we do have an institution for old men, we must not put it too far away from where things are going on. This may apply to old ladies, too. I don't know. Once I thought a Home for Aged Men should be in some peaceful spot in the country, far away from the rush and bustle of the world. Now I think one of the best places for such a Home would be right in Scollay Square, right in the thick of the city, even under the chaos of present reconstruction. Old men want to be in the midst of things. They are not dead. Far from it.

We have many applicants who are not of the institutional type and to whom *outside aid* is given. Among these are the old people who have lived their own lives in their own way for so long that the confines of a Home, with its rules, would be misery. One old descendant of Priscilla and John Alden had his little apartment, did his own housework, cooking and washing, with the exception of his best Sunday shirt which went to the Chinaman. Would he allow any one to go in and help him with his spring cleaning, done with good old New England regularity? He most certainly would not. And he kept well and happy until he was ninety-two, leading a normal,

active life, always wearing a stiff collar and a tight little black tie, and attending all the parades and sometimes the very late suppers of the many organizations to which he belonged. His red shirt, his cap and badge of the Veteran Firemen's Association were ready for every meeting.

Another had a kitchenette apartment, and cleaned the front hall and bathroom every other week, sharing this work with his neighbor, who also kept a kindly, watchful eye over him. He took pride in his well-made bed, his cooking utensils, and his mending, and when evening came, and he settled in his big rocker, he was comforted by the thought that the spirit of his wife came to him and kept him company.

Then there are the *old couples*, who were kept together by outside aid. One that I knew had a little parlor organ and a guitar, and the neighbors often came in to hear them sing the old songs and hymns, 'When You and I Were Young, Maggie,' 'Shall we Gather at the River,' and many others. And they often went out and sang to those who could not come to them. Not a grand opera concert, but one that had an old-fashioned heart appeal. The old man is dead now and his wife is left alone; but I often think of her quaint and true saying, 'Patience is a virtue rare.'

There are many *sick* old men, who with outside aid can be cared for in their homes, by their own people; given the patient care needed by the

aged sick. One that I know, bedridden and blind, was tended by a frail, gentle little wife. They had lived together for sixty years, years of affection and comradeship, unbroken while he lived. One had been on a wheel-chair for years. Another, a sufferer, was cared for night and day by his patient, aged wife. And no hospital beds were kept whiter and smoother than these.

There are problems of *readjustment*. I remember two unhappy old men who were not wanted by their daughters-in-law. They were underfoot. In another home, the old father could not be given proper care by his daughter who was burdened by ill health and many children. For these three, foster homes were found, where they could sit by the fire and smoke their pipes; so they lived contentedly to the end. One who was blind has as his inseparable companion a little white dog, who knew no distinction of age or infirmity, but was just friendly, as little children are with the aged.

Many old people are *lonely*. So few come to them or think of writing them. And a letter means much to one who gets few. Many are extremely resourceful. One writes poetry, constantly, and the papers in the towns where he lived for many years often print it. It is not very bad, and it does his seventy-eight-year-old heart good to see his name in print. Rather a social instinct. Another wrote a letter, to one of our daily papers, saying he was soon to have



his seventy-sixth birthday and would like cards. The letter was printed, and he received over one hundred, some from old friends, almost forgotten. The world is kind, when people stop to remember.

### III. DIFFICULTIES

Aged people are sometimes *difficult*. So are young people. Youth, with its inclination to go its own way, presents many problems. But we have more patience with youth. Old people are sometimes cross and unreasonable. Life has shown them its hard side, and they have lost faith. But they become friendly when they feel a visitor's real sympathetic interest. And it often tends to make people good if we can make them happy. Many old people are '*independent*.' One young fellow of ninety-three was very ill and in bed for months, part of the time almost helpless. He made a remarkable recovery, and one day startled his family by appearing at the head of the stairs. When his son-in-law rushed to help him, he was promptly told to mind his own affairs, that he had walked alone downstairs for over ninety years, and he should continue to do so. A good old Yankee spirit.

One would not put on a clean collar. 'God knows my heart is clean' was his invariable reply. I asked his clergyman once if he would not preach a sermon on the value of a clean heart under a clean collar. It took two years to accomplish this little adjustment, but it was finally done. He is a fine old type.



This same man told the doctors in the hospital, where he went for operation, that he could tell them all the necessary facts about his condition, as he had taken a six weeks' Red Cross course himself, and they, wise and kind men that they were, listened to him with earnest attention.

Another wanted to change his boarding-place, and wrote a letter of many pages on 'The proper way to approach a landlady when seeking board for an elderly man.' There were thirty-three questions to be asked of every landlady seen.

Speaking of little *difficulties and adjustments with discouraging results*: We tried to help plan simple and nourishing meals for a sick man. His sister said she had always 'et what she wanted and when she wanted' and she couldn't see that it would hurt him to do the same. Finally, after many suggestions, she announced one day that she had a supper that would please 'most anybody.' It was a pot of boiled eels and a chocolate pie!

Some old people *hoard* their little money, hide it away, and any attempt to modify this habit must be undertaken carefully. Because they have known want, they are afraid of the future and what it may still bring to them. So they deprive themselves so as to save up for the ever-dreaded needier day, and for the money to lay them 'decently away.' Some hoard because they are that kind. One old fellow has never fully recovered from the fact that our visitor paid forty cents for a Waldorf Saturday night

beans and brown bread, on her way to see him, in response to an urgent summons from his landlady. He called it a horrible example of extravagance for a social worker to set. He could take her to a place where she could get the same, and 'plenty good,' for fifteen cents. He will not have his hair cut regularly, but when the need becomes too great has his head shaved, starting again at nothing.

We sometimes receive a touching little token of *appreciation*. One lonely man, coming for help and advice, brought, one day, a little package, carefully wrapped, a gift, he said, to express his feelings for the friendliness shown to him. It was a piece of Satsuma china, the last remaining of many beautiful pieces he had owned and loved. He was on his way to the hospital, where arrangements had been made for his admission. He did not come back, but the bit of Satsuma remains, telling his little message of kindness to those less fortunate than we.

Good *foster homes*, that *are* homes, are hard to find for aged men. But we have had some wonderful ones. One old man, eighty-eight, wants to wash the dishes. It is his way of expressing his appreciation of the hominess he finds. He has a rubber apron, and sleeves, and sings at his work. And when the dishes are cleared away, he sits by the stove and puffs away at his pipe, the picture of content.

Contrast this with an old man, alone in a cold lodging room, perhaps trying to cook a meal over an oil stove; with all his friends gone, and only bitter

and sad memories left. Perhaps he has done his best and the odds were against him. Has Society a duty to him which must be filled?

#### IV. WHAT ARE WE STRIVING FOR?

That there should be an effort to accord to the winter of life as much happiness and content as possible. That is our goal.

(a) To secure this we should first of all do such preventive work as will put off to the last day the winter of life, the second childhood of dependency. The crippling diseases of old age may have their beginning in faulty care of the child. Diseases, once taken as a matter of course, diphtheria, scarlet fever, diseased tonsils, may result in damaged hearts and kidneys which become serious only in later life, long after the original disease has passed. Let us develop a normal, healthy childhood that will develop into sound manhood and womanhood. Teach young people cleanliness, honor, the love of work and service, that will stay with them through life. Let us have sound bodies and sound minds, to carry to old age.

(b) We should make further studies of industrial conditions, to the end that there should not be long periods of unemployment, when all that has been saved for the rainy day must go, so that old people are left penniless. And we must make some use of the men and women now scrapped, with no industrial future. They cannot all make toys. They would

swamp the world. They cannot all do a little sewing. Cannot legitimate non-competitive employment for slower hands be developed? We are told that the 'expectation of life' has been extended nearly twenty years in Massachusetts since 1855. Then the average age at death was thirty-nine. Now it is fifty-eight. But of what use is it to prolong life if the span between gainful occupation and industrial discard is lengthened?

We must give aged people work to do, even light tasks. We must keep them useful as long as possible. Work gives hope. Uselessness brings despair. One of our old men, who has had one or two slight shocks, spends his days at one of the churches, where he does errands for the workers, shuffling his way slowly. At other times he sits, guarding the choir vestments. When I visit him there, he is generally sound asleep, but a few shakes wake him up, and he solemnly assures me that nothing can disappear while he is on guard. He does very little, but he is 'on salary.' He thinks he keeps the machinery of the church in motion, and is proud of the high position he holds. Added to the fact that he believes he will yet marry an heiress, life for him is full of promise.

Another had a vegetable garden, working in it early and late, and earning enough partly to care for himself and his wife. When a broken shoulder, at seventy-eight, made this work impossible, he sold Christmas greens, raised potted plants for Memorial Day, and is now planning a bungalow. It may never

materialize, but he is thinking of it and waiting for the spring, when he will start his own building.

One very old man invented a strange little musical instrument, which he worked with his feet. Wired figures danced, and bells rang an accompaniment to funny little tunes he played on a funny little fiddle. It was a love for music finding expression in this way, and he played for any one who would listen.

(c) We must be friendly with these dependents in the childhood of old age. They want to know what is going on; they are as much interested in your affairs as you are in theirs. One of our old men always wants to know about my hats, and he writes me that the latest models come down closely over the ears.

Try to be a patient listener. It takes time, but it often eases the heart. One dear old man came to see me. He was worried, and for an hour he talked steadily. I got in a few words here and there. But when he got up to go his face had cleared, and he said, 'It does me so much good to hear you talk.' Another had been to doctors and doctors. His troubles were the common ones of age, some weakness of his heart, considerable hardening of his arteries. It was all so obvious and the busy doctors worked quickly and were soon done with him. He was utterly discouraged. He was sure they had overlooked important things. One day we asked a doctor whom we knew to give him all the time he wanted. It made a wonderful difference to our poor old friend, that lengthy interview. The medicines he received



after it were probably the same he had always received, but the doctor had given of himself. Doctors cannot always do this, but it can be done once to set a troubled mind at rest. Brushing old people aside, when they are in trouble, real or fancied, is one of the tragedies of age.

Do not work with aged people unless you have a sense of humor. You will need it all along the way. The idiosyncrasies of age should not be taken too seriously. You may recall the story of the Englishman whose wife beat him. When asked if he were not going to have her stopped, he replied, 'Oh, no, it amuses 'er and it don't 'urt I.' Let *us* remember that, sometimes.

(d) Have a little margin of money ready for special treats. One of our men, almost ninety, read in the newspaper that 'Erminie' was to be revived with the old cast. He felt that if he could see it again, he would have nothing more to ask for. He couldn't see very well and he couldn't hear very well, and the seats were expensive and he couldn't go alone. I had but very little margin over his weekly budget, and he needed pants. But we managed it. We often can if we try hard enough. And one afternoon he went, and the seats were second row, orchestra, center. And after a while we got the pants, too. Financial need is not always the greatest need. Old people need friends. They are often pitifully exploited, even by their own people. Old age is often helpless and bewildered. Let us plan more for our



chronics and incurables, for whom the resources are so pitifully few. We must work harder for these helpless people. The need for care for our cancer cases, our cardiacs, our hemiplegics, our cases of shaking palsy, must be met. We, to whom they look for help, must see that they are cared for. And the lonely last term will be freed from much distress if they can be assured they will not go into a pauper's grave, but be buried with their own people.

(e) Keep the home ties. Do not separate families if it can possibly be avoided. Do not allow relatives to shift the burden to other shoulders. I cannot express this too strongly. If we allow the family sense of responsibility to be lost, we have shattered the foundations of the home. If the family cannot have the aged people in their homes, let them give personal service, as well as financial aid, no matter how little. Never assume a responsibility which the family should carry. In olden days there was a place for the grandparents beside the fire. They were given honor and respect. Our modern apartments, with beds that let down when a closet door is opened, with places to park the children and the dogs and the automobiles, seem to offer no place for the old people. Modern living has pushed them from their rightful place.

In the Bible we read, 'When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest, but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt

stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not.' We find in these words 'an intimation of the helplessness and passiveness of old age in contrast to the self-regulating ability and confidence of youth.' When these aged dependents stretch out their hands to us, let us try to lead them in the paths where they would go.

'When all the world is old, lad,  
And all the trees are brown;  
And all the sport is stale, lad,  
And all the wheels run down:  
Creep home, and take your place there,  
The spent and maimed among:  
God grant you find one face there  
You loved when all was young.'

This is the winter of life as it comes to us. Let us try to make it, not the winter, without promise, not the end of the road, with no future; but a resting place, in the sunset, with the hope of the dawn of a to-morrow. There is no real problem of old age. It is a problem of life. And life is a preparation for old age, 'the last of life, for which the first was made.' In caring properly for the aged of to-day, may we not be planning our own to-morrows?

## SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE — WHERE IT SHOULD LEAD US

BY FRANCIS BARDWELL

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At last we have come to a conference whereat we are to tell *what* and not *how*. We are asked to define social work as each of us individually sees it and to state, each of us, our goal.

I suppose it will be taken for granted, because I appear in that portion of the programme devoted to the aged and because the problem of the aged has been to a certain extent *my* programme, that I shall confine myself to that subtopic. But I have had other problems than the care and aid of old people. For as existing to-day the almshouse still holds a diversified population and in it has been the beginning of many a plan that eventually led to the resumption of some one's independent existence. However, with a digression or two I shall try to confine my remarks to social work and its purpose as influencing the care of the aged.

Recently the Department of Labor at Washington has been making a survey of the almshouses throughout the country. This survey has been twofold in its investigation: first, How are people cared for in the various almshouses, and, second, What is the cost? I am interested in the first motive, for I believe that

is the underlying reason for the existence of any institution. The second motive does not interest me as much, because so many things apart from cold statistical tables go into the cost of care to dependent people. The investigator was particularly impressed with the work of a certain matron employed for the past twenty years in a city almshouse. With the work of this particular matron in my mind I hit upon the title of my remarks this evening: 'Social Intelligence — Where it should lead us.'

The institution over which the matron presides is a typical city almshouse and infirmary, harboring some one hundred and twenty-five people, and because the city has no other place for the children of poor people needing special care, in certain cases they are sent to this City Home. To this City Home several years ago was sent a little girl suffering from bone trouble. The child was in consequence lame and had difficulty in getting about. This precluded her attendance at school, though she was unusually intelligent. Another inmate was a crippled lawyer, a man of good education, but whose disposition was as badly crippled as his limbs. Because of his ugly and unreasonable personality, he was avoided by his fellow inmates and deserted by his family.

One morning, my matron took little Mary, the crippled child, by the hand and together they walked down the long corridor and into the pleasant room occupied by the man of the law.

'Mr. J.,' the matron said, 'I have brought Mary.

Like yourself, she finds it hard to go about, and so cannot go to school. You are the only one here who can teach her. Will you?’

And then began the little school and Mary’s education.

The matron told me this in the office, standing behind the long table, and I said, naturally I think you will agree, ‘That’s about as fine a piece of social work as I have ever encountered!’

Then she asked very quietly, this woman who for twenty years had been doing these things: ‘Mr. Bardwell, what *is* social work? I hear the term used so much now. I’ve wanted to ask you what it’s all about.’

I think I held up my hands and said, ‘But — but, do *I* know?’

Perhaps no phrase has been so belabored, so over-ridden, so misconstrued as the term ‘social work’; and I suppose no class of workers has suffered more keenly from unjust and unkind criticism than the social worker. Of course a term had to be coined to designate laborers employed in the task of helping unfortunate people, and so from the term ‘charity worker’ came ‘social worker,’ because charity worker as a name was inadequate, and years back we were getting shy of the term ‘charity.’ We wanted something broader. Charity work is only one branch of social work as social work is defined to-day. The social worker is the soldier in the army that is battling for public welfare. Some of us — most of us —

are just privates; some are officers. Our labors are a battle and a march. But where are we marching? Why social work anyway? With our schools, our colleges, our free education, our national, state, and municipal advantages paid for by us all in taxation — why social work? Why the social worker?

Old people complainingly tell me that we are living in a disjointed age. To all old people through the ages the times that have passed are better than the days which are. Still we *are* living under peculiar conditions. This is the age when children are born in hospitals, young people are married in country clubs, and those who pass on are buried from the 'mortuary parlors' of the undertakers. Why? Because, in great part, of the lack of proper homes. For many, home has become simply an abiding-place; in many cases the last place to which to go. The flavor of its old-time sweetness is gone. Through the lack of proper homes and housing, we have disorganized families, beset by troublesome problems, and finally the appeal to the welfare agency and the visit of the social worker.

The social worker with minor exceptions is a city institution. Perhaps the rural population would be better off if receiving the ministration of organized welfare. I say perhaps. People who dwell in country places are living more rationally, have a bit more pride, I think, in accepting anything that savors of aid or assistance, and stand the buffets of the world better. There *is* a distinction.



Social work, when reduced to the least common denominator, has a simple threefold function:

- (1) To prevent suffering and dependence.
- (2) To alleviate distress.
- (3) To rehabilitate.

Go beyond that if you will, and make it broader by saying:

Social work is the science that by preventive and constructive philanthropy guards the welfare of humanity.

Now as to the agency whereby this work is done, that is, the social worker. I crave it understood that the self-styled social worker (whom you have all met and avoided) I place outside the term. The helter-skelter man or woman, who assumes much, usually trained neither by education nor experience, and who intermittently appears and disappears and because of whom the name social worker is sometimes held in disrepute — I wave that type aside. Would that my gesture were a quietus.

I have found three legitimate types of social worker: (*a*) the worker trained by education, (*b*) the worker trained by experience, (*c*) the worker possessing social intelligence. And of these classes the third is in the majority. I know that I have come in contact more frequently with this third type: the person gifted naturally with social intelligence — an admixture of head and heart; in which neither predominates, but each functions normally, a well-balanced man or woman, blessed with horse sense

and a persistent will to do. Some go into it because it furnishes a living, some because of interest in the job and in people, and some because of a keen social sense.

I must not be quoted as saying that only this last class possesses social intelligence. Far from it. Many specially trained workers have it and because of it, as blended with a social education, make a success of the work. But we must bear in mind that it is those who have social intelligence who actually do most of the actual work in caring for dependents. It may be the warden and matron of an almshouse, the kindly and sympathetic foster mother, the couple who head cottages in the schools for boys or girls; whoever they are they come for twenty-four hours each day in personal association with the people who need specialized attention. If they do not possess social intelligence, they soon tire of the work and seek other fields or are discharged.

If time permitted I could give many illustrations of this characteristic which I call social intelligence. Cases of reunited families, cases of reformed drunkards, cases of ne'er-do-wells who have gone back to self-support, cases which specially trained social workers would be proud of, yet considered by the doers as all in a day's work. Is it a wonder that my matron asked me: 'What is social work?' As the general practitioner is to the rest of the profession of medicine, so are those possessing social intelligence to the cause of welfare work. The trained worker is

the specialist. Most of humanity when ill depends upon the family doctor. Only in dire emergency, the specialist.

The social worker is the servant of the community. It is he or she who carries out the wishes of the community related to the welfare of the less fortunate members of the community.

In its simplest form social work is nothing but neighborliness. In country towns neighbors have not gone out of fashion and so we find few social workers there. People in cities have shifted their responsibility and are willing to pay to have their neighborhood duties attended to. Gradually, too, we see that the churches are adopting the social worker as the proper individual to investigate and assist. This did not come about easily, but once installed in the parish the trained worker has proved the worth of the experiment. A well-known and much-respected Boston woman, for many years identified with many charitable agencies, once said to me: 'Here in Massachusetts, if a need is proved to exist, the remedy is always found. Whether it be for highly trained workers in specific fields, or for a special institution for the care of certain types, if a need is proven the remedy comes into being.' Isn't that really the why of social work?

Who discovers the need? Is it not the initiative of the social worker, the worker with a vision? Later comes the taking-up by other workers. Our own little horizon is so limited that reforms come about

through a multiplicity of horizons overlapping and at last covering the whole State, perhaps the entire Nation.

Does any one here doubt that if thirty years ago social work had been as well organized for discovering needs as it is to-day, we should not have had to wait so long for our institution for the feeble-minded and for the tuberculous? It has been exceedingly interesting to me to watch the progress of welfare work during the last thirty years. I started as a young overseer of the poor at the time when the customary aid allowed by the State to a family — any family, mind you — was two dollars a week in summer and three dollars in winter. Such a policy created dependents. There was nothing intelligent in such care. It wasn't care — it was throwing an inadequate life preserver to a drowning man when just a pound or two more of buoyancy would have aided him in reaching shore. So as an overseer I ignored the state rule. Many other overseers of that time did so, and finally we forced a law for adequate relief. I have seen the removal of the insane, the epileptics, the tuberculous from our almshouses. It was the obvious thing to do, but it is the obvious thing that is seldom done when it should be done.

I am asked to dip into the future, and candidly state what is the goal of my own endeavors. I am Yankee enough to begin with a question: Why do we do so much for the individual who is submerged to the neck and ignore the man who is in up to his

armpits? That is, both public and private charities hasten to the rescue of the very poor and (save in the case of some specific private societies) hold aloof from the man who is just beginning to get beyond his depth. We really know little about preventive philanthropy as applied to aged adults. I have seen so many cases where a friendly hand over the rough places a few years back would ward a body from the town farm.

I want, then, first to see the aged *near-dependent* helped. In my mind nothing is so appalling as to know that one is *headed for dependence* with no known agency to offer assistance. Is the answer old-age pensions? That is a question that will soon be upon us. How shall we stand? If we could be sure that relief through such a channel would be bestowed only upon the really needy, that each case would stand upon its own record of the need of assistance, that unwilling relatives would be made willing contributors, that the workings of the law would not be a blanket cover-all, but a discriminating measure to assist only the real type which should be helped — then perhaps old-age pensions would be workable.

Personally I'm opposed to the term 'pension' as applied to aid. It is rather dangerous ground, the giving of a stipulated sum irrespective of comparative needs. I do not favor public or private doles. Are not old-age pensions a premium paid for a lack of thrift? Are they not an acknowledgment that an industrial system is paying inadequate wages? It



makes very little difference in the administration of a pension system if one of its policies is that no pension shall be granted until all other agencies have been appealed to, because all other agencies usually withdraw in favor of 'a sure thing.'

What then in its place? I would suggest the extension of our relief laws so that the local overseers can render assistance to those who are aged and *nearing* dependence. That primarily such aid should be used to keep people in their own homes. I want to see old people cared for in their own homes so far as it is possible.

We have the problem of the aged to-day because of the removal of the old person from the family. This move was wrong in the beginning. The old person belongs in the family, the patriarch to the clan. It is the family's obligation, the children's duty. It has been made too easy in the past to place the non-institution case in an institution, simply because the family shirks its obligation. With the real institution case, that is, the sick old people, it is different. Nursing care or custodial care may then be necessary. But in general I think that children should have the benefit of association with their aged relatives. It is better for the children. If you had seen as much of the dumping of old people into an almshouse, of their lonesomeness and homesickness as I have, you'd agree, and together we'd start a society for the education or eradication of sons' wives. For it is seldom daughters' husbands who do this thing.



Just a moment upon this distinction of institutional and non-institutional cases. We understand it better than we used to — at least we people who are engaged in public relief. It has been evident that a decided effort has been made, upon the part of the overseers, in recent years to continue assistance outside of an institution for such time as the person can live properly without too much supervision, and only when mental or physical infirmities pass beyond the safety line to consider an institution.

This is one reason for the decrease in almshouse population and the closing of some of the smaller almshouses. This beneficial change has come naturally if slowly, and the reason for its coming is the realization that the happiness of the aged individual must be considered. Here is one of those wise changes where the public agencies have outdistanced the private field, for save in a few notable instances the private Homes for Aged People have not attempted it. Placing old people in foster families is difficult, for while many homes are open to children, few are willing to accept old people without inordinate expense. So that logically the person's own home should be maintained or board secured with relatives.

We come now to the 'institution case.' Only those of us who are engaged in the actual work of caring for and placing old people know the dearth of hospitals for chronic illness. In this matter, of course, the public agencies lead. We have the State Infirmity,

and the Long Island Infirmary, two large institutions and usually filled with sick old people. Such cities as Holyoke, Springfield, Fall River, New Bedford, Lowell, Lawrence, Haverhill, make good provision for aged sufferers in their almshouse hospitals. But these are public almshouses. In the private field there are four or five Homes, many maintained on geographical limits, with admission correspondingly restricted. This leaves a large population that must depend entirely upon the State Infirmary for the care of the aged suffering from chronic illness. What is the result? That a chronic case in a little town in Berkshire County must for hospital care be removed to Tewksbury State Almshouse — a rather inhuman proceeding when we consider that he leaves behind, a hundred and fifty miles away, all those who may be interested in him.

I want to see this pressure on the big public infirmaries removed. Many times their hospital capacity is crowded to the limit. I want to see hospitals for chronic patients existing in other parts of the State — not huge institutions, but smaller and more homey places. The larger the institution the more institutional it is. Better not call them hospitals at all — perhaps 'infirmaries' — and these not alone for the public dependent, but for those who may be possessed of a little means, or who have interested relatives who are anxious to pay.

I want to see the bars down in many of our small general hospitals, so that chronic cases can be ac-

cepted. I know when I make this suggestion that I stand on dangerous ground and that precedent (that grim bugbear) is against me. I know that many of the physicians and nurses would oppose. Nevertheless, I hope to see added to most of our hospitals a ward for chronic patients. I make this suggestion because it is logical, because such cases should be cared for near their own homes, and because at no inordinate expense the local hospitals can provide for these patients.

Next, I want to see a better understanding as to children's obligation to care for their aged parents or relatives. Not because the law so orders, but because it is morally right. This is a matter of obligation and education. As a generation we are deficient in respect for the aged. What has brought this about I do not know unless it be that it is an age of disrespect of everything. Old people realize it; it was not so in their youth. Then age was venerated and youth stepped aside or assisted. The don't-care attitude of modern youth is not understood by old people, into whose education was incorporated a feeling of respect for age. I want to see this respect for the aged again become a part of youth's education.

Am I going beyond my zone when I bring to your notice the bad nomenclature of dependents? Formerly all recipients of public relief were called 'paupers.' Not a bad name as names go; it started out to mean 'poor.' But then we heaped so much

else upon it that it fell into disrepute. It is no reproach to be poor. But gradually certain classes of poor people stepped out from under the ban, so that to-day the term 'pauper' is applied to only a few kinds of dependents. But it seems to be understood, for some unknown reason, that all almshouse inmates are paupers, as are also all individuals of criminal tendencies. I ask, why pick on almshouse people? I could show you a hundred almshouse inmates who have been as eminently respectable as any of us, whose lives have been a sacrifice and whose days have been full of unselfishness.

I want the future to abandon the word 'pauper' as applied to almshouse people. I want all people receiving aid from public resources, from money raised by taxation, to be known as 'public dependents.' This to all classes: almshouse inmates, outdoor poor, indigent and neglected children, hospital cases, mothers and their dependent children. There should be no aristocracy in public relief, not even if certain statutes try to place preferred types apart.

I want to see a more keen interest upon the part of the public in the care of old people. Dr. Edward Everett Hale used to advise every one to adopt a grandmother. It was good advice. Old people like attention and crave the companionship of younger people. This is the strongest argument for giving them a normal family life.

I want to see a wholehearted endeavor that will lead to the establishment of minor remunerative

industries for old people, an endeavor that will furnish an outlet for their work. It is most discouraging to make braided or hooked rugs, patchwork quilts, knit lace, crochet infants' garments, weave baskets, fashion axe handles, unless the product can be sold and the laborer encouraged.

Now for a rather intimate topic — and a threadbare topic perhaps — the feeling of the two classes of workers toward each other. By the two classes I mean the one engaged in the public welfare and the other as employed by the private agencies. I want to see the attitude of 'East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet' pass out to sea. It does exist. There are many private workers who will not recognize the real worth of many public officials, those in the state service and overseers of the poor of our towns and cities. The worth is there, my friends. Call upon us, and so far as the law will allow us we are at your command. Public welfare has made rapid strides during the last two decades.

So, too, I find the public official is inclined to belittle the private agencies. We forget the pioneer work of the private charities. In many instances they blazed the way for us all — did laboratory work, resulting in a better understanding of vexed problems and the road to a satisfactory solution. I want to see a better understanding; lean hard; the other fellow expects it.

I know that the branch of social work which is devoted to the care of old people holds in the estima-

tion of the average social worker the least hopefulness. The problem of youth is *the* hopeful problem, hence the majority select it as their field. The problem of family welfare bears interest; it is varied; one builds for a future. The problem of old age is not hopeful. To most it is probably discouraging: it has such a limited future, a short road at best; few care to enter this field. Still you are needed in this field if you are blessed with training and social intelligence. There is an education in it rich with the experience of others, and then the closing of the lids over tired old eyes and the folding of work-worn hands.

I have said two things as to our future work with old people in their homes:

1. Give them enough support so that they may lead a fairly normal life in their own environment, among their neighbors. Do not make them institution cases because it is easier so to do — easier for the family, easier for the children, easier for you.

2. The second matter is akin to it: Give them happiness.

But two things remain to the aged: happiness and the hope of heaven. The last is out of your reach to bestow or take away. But happiness, their happiness, may be in the hollow of your hand — do not withhold it.



PART IV  
THE GOAL FOR SOCIAL WORKERS IN  
TRAINING



# 'TO KEEP ALIVE AS WELL AS TO BE BORN'

BY LUCY WRIGHT

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## I. THE DEFINITION

I AM thinking of the goal of preparation for social work in a particular way. Taking for granted that our subject-matter is human relationships, I describe our goal as *so to sensitize workers to the needs and possibilities before them that they may be peculiarly fitted to search for, to recognize, and to interpret truth, and to create and cultivate beauty in human relationships, even under the difficulties which characterize the special approaches of social work.* I believe this is true for relationships between individuals, among groups, and in our common life. Hence I see it, not as the lone task of the social worker, but as the general task of all and as the particular task of social workers in relation to the individuals and groups with whom they work.

Imaginative description of a goal in poetry, preferably to be sung, helps make it immediate to me. The goal which I have just given, and also an expression of my effort to relate the personal and the professional with the universal in every aspect of the day's work, is expressed for me in music and poetry by Parry's setting of the stanzas from Blake's

'Prophetic Books,' called 'Jerusalem.' [Remember that the words were written more than a hundred years ago by a poet profoundly social in his point of view; that the music was written during the late war, and that the song is sometimes sung joyfully by school children. Think of 'Jerusalem' as if it were our goal, and 'England' as this country or any other.]

And did those feet in ancient time  
 Walk upon England's mountains green;  
 And was the holy Lamb of God  
 On England's pleasant pastures seen?  
 And did the Countenance Divine  
 Shine forth upon our clouded hills;  
 And was Jerusalem builded here,  
 Among these dark Satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burnished gold!  
 Bring me my arrows of desire!  
 Bring me my spear! O clouds unfold!  
 Bring me my chariot of fire!  
 I will not cease from mental fight  
 Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand  
 Till we have built Jerusalem  
 In England's green and pleasant land.

I wish that social workers had some such song of their own to sing before and after all their assemblies. That song more nearly describes my feeling about the goal of social work than all the prose paragraphs I can assemble.

One who has lived among the Bedouins of the desert, in constant danger and hardship, tells us that 'they rise triumphant over their environment by

sheer strength of spirit. . . . The world and all its material blessings are trifles compared with the things of the spirit; they know that the only things that are important to know are how to worship God and how to associate with our fellow men.' It is, perhaps, a harder undertaking, both for those in power and those at a disadvantage, to keep this emphasis in the midst of the dangers and temptations of our highly organized industrial society. Still, it might be said that the endeavor of social work is, in the particular ways I have suggested, to help keep this emphasis, even under particular difficulties and in a society in which perspective in the art of living is hard to keep under the most favorable conditions.

There is, indeed, the possibility that social work may have an advantage here; that the facing of common hardships may be our peculiar opportunity — a different set of hardships, to be sure, but conceivably, if we see them aright, bearing the same relation to education in the art of living as the hardships of the desert. Furthermore, the clear vision and sharp perspective which lead to reform are perhaps only so gained, through first-hand knowledge of hardship.

That it shall lead to reform is an essential part of my definition. To create and cultivate beauty, especially in our common life, necessitates radical reform. This goes back to my conviction too that theories of social ethics must show themselves, not only in the field of education which we have chosen

for our special topic at this conference, but in economic and political fields as well. It goes back also to my conviction that in social work, *application* of theory is the form for which we must struggle, even as the sculptor, painter, or poet struggles for his particular form of expression.

I will not cease from mental fight  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green and pleasant land.

It is said that when a group of Christians went to Gandhi and asked him how they might make their religion more understandable to others, Gandhi replied, 'By practicing Christianity.' So the aim and ideal of social work which I have suggested may, for Christians, be regarded as their particular form of effort to let the spirit of Christ enter our common life.

## II. SUBDIVISIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

So far as time allows, may I discuss and try to illustrate this definition of goal and of preparation for social work more concretely?

### I. *Keeping Alive*

I have used the word 'sensitize,' meaning 'to make alive to.' Some of us are no doubt born social workers; some are reborn into social work. For all of us is the need to keep alive to aims and ideals in the day's work. It is of continuous preparation for social



work in this sense, rather than of the initial preparation that I speak. For some this is easy. From them we learn; for others of us it is hard. We struggle.

It is to be said, also, that social work as a part of a life, a thread running through a life, is one thing; as the major occupation of a life, week in and out, year in and out, under pressure of time, work, repetition, and given conditions over which we have no control, is another. It is in the widening of the gap between aims and ideals and the actual content of the day's work for this second group that we run the risk of becoming cheerful Mrs. Jellybys, if nothing worse.

I realize that there are many men and women whose day's work, in spite of the perils of drudgery and organization, is still transformed by *the way they see it*. I suspect that there may be in this room at this moment a settlement worker who once told me she 'didn't feel the need of getting away from her work, of getting outside it, as so many of us do — the work is her life. She could not do work from which she felt she had to make weekly escapes.' I suspect that she is one of those who are perpetually refreshed by what I call working in three dimensions all the time. I suspect that she has a beautifully proportioned relation between the personal, professional, and universal in which she lives. This is only another way of saying that she is *already* 'sensitized' — 'possessed by the Great Spirit,' to quote Mr. Lee.

*2. Search*

For me, personally, there are one or two words in the definition of the goal of preparation that are of crucial importance to keeping alive. One is the word 'search.' I like to think of social work as a search. I don't know how many of you remember a quotation from Elder Robinson on one of the Pilgrim Tercentenary programmes, to the effect that 'God has never allowed all His truth to burst through at once.' There is more to be discovered. Such are the temptations and difficulties of social work at this time that I believe this to be an extremely important point to emphasize.

There is, first of all, the sheer difficulty of our subject-matter — human relationships; our blindness and ignorance, our prejudices; our bad habits; the barriers of complexity, and abuse of power with which our common life is weighted. These all incline one to say that we are struggling, through social work, to understand and offset the barrier-creating forces in individual and group life.

I do not mean by this that we are searching for something strange and remote. I appreciate what Dr. Cabot has pointed out — that we already know more about human beings than we do about anything else. We have had personal experience of being human, and, to some extent, of knowing others. But it is equally true that in general our searches of to-day focus on the understanding, control, and best use of almost any other kinds of powers than those of

human nature, whether in ourselves or in others. This has colored the technique of social work incredibly.

### 3. *Tentative Dogmatisms*

Nor does this emphasis on search mean that I fail to recognize the importance of the 'tentative dogmatisms' of which Glenn Frank speaks so clearly in the October (1925) 'Century.' He says, 'the end of all research and analysis is synthesis and social application' — that is, by 'tentative dogmatisms.' He says further that our task to-day is 'to help mankind use the results of modern biology, psychology, sociology, and other sciences for the enrichment, the increase, and the moral unification of life.' And, after speaking of the relation of science and religion, he closes by quoting Dean Inge: 'It is the function of religion to prevent the fruits of the flowering times of the spirit from being lost.'

I recognize, then, both that our search is for what is near at hand, perhaps obvious, and that we have need to make every use of tentative dogmatisms. But I am asking that they be kept tentative and that we face our tendency to assume in social work that the truth has been once and for all delivered to the saints, and that we have only 'to distribute moral pocket handkerchiefs among the heathen.'

Perhaps I can best show the need of tentativeness in our dogmatisms by a moment's discussion of Mrs. Jellyby. I may be doing the woman an injustice, but

as I remember her, she was inclined to neglect her home and personal life in this cause I have mentioned (that of distribution of moral pocket handkerchiefs among the heathen). In any case, my reflections about her are not only that she neglected her home and gloried in her technique, but that she was untroubled by such questions as whether the heathen, as a matter of fact, used pocket handkerchiefs; whether they had indeed the customs of either pockets or pocket handkerchiefs; whether they might not have such a state of perfect physical health as not even to require pocket handkerchiefs. (Whatever their attitude toward the charm of pockets might be, once they understood about them!)

Furthermore, she was evidently untroubled by the question whether, even if these issues were otherwise, the measure of moral pocket handkerchiefs is the one by which *her* idea of morals can be connected up with the idea of morals of which, in their primitive way, the heathen are no doubt in possession. (Had the pocket handkerchiefs been simply a means of bringing Mrs. Jellyby herself in contact with the heathen, another set of questions would have been raised.) Many organizations, if not individual social workers, by means of the very detachment of organization, seem to me to be in this position and danger. That even the missionary may change and has changed in these respects, is exquisitely illustrated in Jean Mackenzie's recent book, 'African Clearings,' and in other of her writings.

4. *Flashes of Insight into Truth and Beauty in  
Human Relations*

What is it, this creative insight, this recognition of truth and beauty in the life or situation before us, this *only basis* on which we can get that give-and-take in points of view, upon which human understandings depend. It is best described for me, in general, if I may quote poetry again, by Watson, in

Momentous to himself as I to me,  
Hath each man been that ever woman bore;  
Once in a lightning flash of sympathy,  
I felt that truth a moment, and no more.

Such flashes of insight are, I take it, what we first of all seek for. They make our beginning, the only beginning from which anything real may follow. They are basic. May I give three illustrations which I hope show my meaning. Illustrations of this same point might be drawn from many fields, and from group as well as individual life, but mine to-day are chosen deliberately from among the cruder problems which we have to face, the needs of those who cannot speak for themselves in words.

(a) I think first of the work of Dr. Walter E. Fernald, particularly that which resulted in the farm colony for able-bodied imbecile men at Templeton. This is, I think, a most striking example of how social work of great economic and social significance issues from just such flashes of creative insight as I have suggested. A colleague of Dr. Fernald's once de-



scribed to me an incident of this basic kind which was, I believe, the key to the training of able-bodied imbeciles to a place of usefulness in their own institution, if not in the world. He described Dr. Fernald with pick and shovel, himself working side by side with the physically powerful but mentally defective would-be laborers until little by little he saw how to bring the task within their power, and thus establish that extra-simple routine which is often pain to the sophisticated but bliss to the mentally defective. A limited goal made clear. First, all together with picks, just so far; then lay them down. Now, then, with the shovel, all together, just so far; so! — *See what we have done!*

Leadership, group effort, one step at a time, visible accomplishment. With that technique to-day, a colony of imbecile men, able-bodied but needing custodial care, does the farming which provides a large part of the annual food supply for a great state institution, noticeably reducing the cost of maintenance to the State. It is a colony remarkable, too, for the contentment and even the happiness of its members. But it is easy to forget the kind of human insight that had to come first.

Another instance of this same power to interpret the life of another and so bring it to usefulness I observed for myself when visiting this same school with a group of college students. We were watching the expression which came over the face of a young feeble-minded boy who had succeeded after mighty



effort in fitting a wooden block into a space where it belonged. 'Remember,' Dr. Fernald said, 'that for this boy the mental effort to accomplish this is equivalent to solving a problem in calculus for you.'

(b) Sometimes our flash of insight comes afterwards, when some idea or incident makes you suddenly see an individual or a complex problem in a wholly new light. Such a thing occurred to me this very last August when, in a railroad station, I happened upon an individual whom I had seen in the past for years as almost the most difficult and baffling 'problem' I had ever known. I add here a part of the account of this experience which I wrote soon afterward. It may not be the final word, but it is surely nearer the truth than any of the official summaries of the case that have accompanied this 'patient' to hospitals, psychopathic and other, in past years!

In making this study and experiment in recording, I arrived at five possible ways of looking at any such material about to be recorded which I thought might help wrest a meaning from it. The five headings are: (1) A *description* as seen (with imagination); (2) *checking up* by historical perspective; (3) *comparison* with other instances; (4) *relation* to other significant aspects within the field of social work; (5) *wider significance*. I shall give here only the first.

It was in the waiting-room of the South Station, in a section of the facing seats named for the Massachusetts Counties (in 'Nantucket' in fact) that I had

the latest unexpected glimpse of my deaf-blind friend of earlier days. She was sitting there with her deaf-mute husband and their charming-looking child of three. I didn't speak with them; he didn't know me, and she — well, somehow at that moment I couldn't have pressed by the barriers and made myself known to her to save my life. That, too, in spite of a vow of long standing never, if I can help it, to leave a blind person I know unaware of my presence even in passing. I was spellbound by what I saw and overwhelmed by thoughts leaping out of the past. So I took advantage of her handicap and watched her. At first, much as one might observe the life of another species — a nest of field mice or a pair of winter wrens.

It wasn't a matter of language. I use the sign language badly, but she, with her absolute memory of touch, would have recognized my hand and identified my awkward printing before I had finished spelling the words out into her hand, and she might have laughed aloud at my clumsiness to boot. No, it wasn't that. And it wasn't because I was seeing my sister off for the West, for there was time enough, and my sister, sitting between me and them, was already consumed with interest in the inconspicuous but unusual trio, and moved to tears as she watched them there beside us, so unconscious and happy in their life together. No, it wasn't that. Nor was it the thought that he or she, or both, might feel any touch of resentment toward me because of my official re-

lations with her education and training and the friendly custodial care of the past. I had thought of that, but I knew how warm, impulsive, friendly and sociable and childlike she had always been and how utterly unaware of being regarded as a problem. Besides, I had gone out of her life before her great crisis, when the friendly care that was to keep her within the bounds of safety, for the child-bearing period at least, was interrupted; and, in any case, she had had her way. No, it wasn't that. I was merely silent with awe before this particular mysterious embodiment of human life. I felt an outsider, an onlooker at life in which I had no part.

The thought of this small, quiet, brown-haired deaf-blind woman, with an older deaf-mute husband and baby girl may even be repellent. But in real life you couldn't have looked upon them with anything but interest and liking, so quickly did they become persons. The child, as pretty and sweet as possible in appearance, was almost asleep when we first saw them, her head curled in the mother's lap. But it seemed as though my very glance, or the questions in my mind, may have made her restless; for she opened rather fine dark blue eyes and bent a clear gaze directly upon me. There was no flutter of human recognition and response in it, but rather a slightly detached stare which I had seen once before in the child of a blind parent. Perhaps it came of perpetually looking in vain into the mother's blind eyes. In any case, it was as if she were not accus-

tomed to *exchange* of glances. But I was answered on one score: the child could see. She had looked to make sure that her little handbag was safe, then closed her eyes again and settled down to sleep in earnest.

Presently the knowing hand of the mother laid a finger across the little lips and made sure of the fact of sleep. One of the child's arms had dropped down uncomfortably at the side. In the tiniest fraction of time the knowing hand discovered this, too, gathered up the relaxed and hanging arm, made both arms comfortable, tucked the little coat about, all with incredible care and gentleness, and reported the news to the deaf-mute husband, speaking rapidly and silently into his hand. He took one corroborating glance and they had a happy little understanding about it. It was evident from the bundles that a shopping expedition was just over, and no doubt the child had been very tired.

In the meantime the husband had been reading the daily paper to himself. Now he began relating interesting bits of news into his wife's upraised left hand. Her right hand was busy from time to time, roaming lightly over the little sleeping figure to make sure all was well. But occasionally she lifted it to make a quick comment into his hand — now serious, now amused — you knew by her face. Sometimes he read a long passage to her, apparently word for word. It was all so simple, natural, silent and intimate, this interdependence, and he, seeing, seemed as unconscious and absorbed as she.

At moments I felt a guilty sense of encroaching upon their privacy, here at a busy hour, in the heart of a crowded station, to them obviously a perfectly quiet, unconfused place. For me the experience was like being lost in the dark, and suddenly having a light switched on inside a house, which showed you to be unwittingly gazing into a private sitting-room when you thought you were on the highway. Once she laughed in the merry little way I remembered, the quiet chuckle, and I almost spoke, but the on-looker dominated.

Questions struggled for recognition in my mind. Could the child hear? But thoughts of heredity and eugenics cannot have full play before the homely presences in question. It is appalling, knowing so much about the human beings next you, that you ask impersonal general questions about them in your mind. Even if you are harried by the question, 'Was it fair to the child' you can hardly think it out in their presence. You can only hope that in the long run she may be glad she was born.

Sometimes I felt I might be on the brink of receiving a revelation. If I held my breath and could be still enough, as in watching bird-life, perhaps I could discover something, find an answer to some of those endless questions that seem, at times, to hang almost threateningly over the human race — questions about parents and children and the values of life under difficulties. Whatever it might seem to me, what was their life like to *them*? — something so



extraordinarily real seemed to be before us. This may have been because the silent pantomime was so convincing, such a miracle of clear and honest human expression. It was almost like having a succession of naked thoughts passing before you. Speech is so often concealed and makes people artificial and meaningless, especially in railroad stations where personality seems so often at its lowest ebb.

As we made our way to the 'Wolverine,' one tiny incident more almost occurred. They were still reading the paper as we passed them. The aisle was wide enough between the facing seats — we didn't even brush them as we passed, but her blind face looked up with the odd expression of curiosity I knew of old, when vibrations or a familiar smell caught her attention. It was like an inquiring glance; a lift of the eyebrows went with it. Was it possible she knew that a familiar person was passing? In any case, a pleasant smile glimmered on her face. He didn't look up. He devoted himself to her as to a precious cause. The child was still asleep.

(c) My third illustration is such a simple one that in some ways I hesitate to use it, but in others, it seems to me to illustrate most closely of all the point I wish to make. Within a very few days, in reading a poem of Tagore's which I had never seen before, I was suddenly reminded of a woman whom I came to know well many years ago — a woman living in great poverty with a drunken, tuberculous husband and three children. She was shy, patient, unexpres-



sive, yet one day she suddenly startled the whole little world in which she lived. Her boy was delinquent and was before the police-court. The mother was present in the court-room and when she grasped the fact that the child was about to be sent by the court to a reformatory for boys, this patient, unexpressive woman threw herself down before the judge and continued to scream and beat her head upon the floor until she was assured that decision in the whole matter was postponed. We were asked to find out why she did this. I shall never forget the return of the worker who had succeeded in establishing communication with this woman. 'What do you think!' she said, 'Mrs. B. says it was the only way she knew how to stop the judge. She had to. The child mustn't be punished for what is her fault. When he was little, she, gossiping with the neighbors, left scalding water where he fell into it and was badly burned. That made him nervous and naughty. It is she who must be punished, not he.' So we had the beginning — the truth and beauty of this situation as common ground — the love to which understanding might or might not be added.

These were the lines from Tagore which made me remember her. They are from 'Sea-Waves,' a poem in which the poet searches for what may be found of meaning in the cruel wreck of a ship in a storm, in which some hundreds of human beings perished:

Lo, the mother leaps to destruction, why to her breast does she  
clasp her child?

She runs to the face of Death, even there she will not surrender it.  
In the cruel stream of dead nature in the heart of man  
Whence came such love?  
Such mother-love that never knows despair, that will not acknow-  
ledge terror,  
Eternally renewed, with drafts of the nectar of life —  
He who but for a moment has known it in any corner of the uni-  
verse  
Could he be motherless?  
Into the heart of this storm, in a mother's weak being,  
Love has come that conquers death.  
What love has wakened this love?

### III. CONCLUSIONS

All that I have said is fragmentary, and the gap between my idea and the illustrations I have given from literature or life is still so wide that I must try once more to say what is the transforming fact for me — in what the truth and beauty which we search for consists. For me it consists in consciousness of the immanence of God. I wish I knew how to say this more concretely. I can only borrow again, as I am always borrowing — this time three tiny quotations which I hope may help to make my point less remote.

First, from an English philosopher: 'Every finding of new truth, every creation of new beauty, every victory of goodness, every flash of spiritual insight and thrill of spiritual passion, is, while it lasts, a communion, here and now, with God.'

Second: 'All through my childhood and even after

I had grown up and been away on a pilgrimage, my mother would come to me when I was in bed for the night and sit beside me, and ask me about everything that had happened to me during the day. Then she would say, "Now it is time to go to sleep. Have you enjoyed anything especially in the day's experience, my son?" When I would answer "yes," she would reply, "Well, that was God's presence which you felt." With these words she would leave me for the night.'

Finally, I will quote what is, I think, the most complete expression of the relation between the little things and the Whole — the last of one of three stanzas by Evelyn Underhill:

I come in the little things,  
Saith the Lord,  
My starry wings  
I do forsake  
Love's highway of humility to take.  
Meekly I fit my stature to your need  
In beggar's part  
About your gates I shall not cease to plead —  
As man to speak with man —  
Till by such art  
I shall achieve My Immemorial Plan,  
Pass the low lintel of the human heart.

## TECHNIQUE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS IN SOCIAL WORK

BY MRS. EVA WHITING WHITE

*Director, Simmons College School of Social Work*

I AM very glad to speak on the above subject because technique is essential to any profession. Yet technique presents a lure which causes one to be afraid of it unless much goes before the teaching of technique *per se* and much after. In working out the detail of methods one must be careful not to become submerged. There is a kind of satisfaction in the perfection of mechanical detail which has a bad effect on the intellectual power of the individual, to say nothing of barring the way to the making of real contributions in any given field. A few months ago in a copy of 'Punch' there was a picture of a studio. The artist was evidently agonizing over a portrait. Near by stood a slavey who had cleaned the hearth to her complete satisfaction. She is looking at the result of her labor and at the artist, and exclaims, 'I'm glad I ain't him.'

Schiller, dominated by something of the thought I am endeavoring to express, once wrote, 'Error is life, Perfection death.'

It is not that I belittle technique. It is absolutely essential, but we must master *it*. It must not master us. The call which was sent out to this conference

presents the challenge. It is stated in that preliminary announcement that, during the last ten years, one hundred sixty-four speakers out of one hundred sixty-five have dwelt, not on our ends, but on the means to our ends. Surely we do not want those who follow us to duplicate this! At the dedication of Theodora House two weeks ago, Maud Ballington Booth said that she hoped social work would not become a profession, because so-called scientific social workers tended to lose the purity of their motive, meaning by this, I suppose, that focusing on scientific analysis, if one is not careful, plunges one into an abyss of ineffectual action. There is no surer way to kill the social intelligence about which Mr. Bardwell spoke (page 145). If, during the last ten years, technique has been too near the center of our attention, do we not need to read this from 'The Art Spirit,' by Robert Henri?

The real study of an art student is generally missed in the pursuit of a copying technique. I knew men who were students at the Académie Julien in Paris, where I studied in 1888, thirteen years ago. I visited the Académie this year (1901) and found some of the same students still there, repeating the same exercises, and doing work *nearly* as good as they did it thirteen years ago. At almost any time in these thirteen years they have had technical ability enough to produce masterpieces. Many of them are more facile in their trade of copying the model, and they make fewer mistakes and imperfections of literal drawing and proportion than do some of the greatest masters of art.

These students have become masters of the trade of

drawing, as some others have become masters of grammar. And like so many of the latter, brilliant jugglers of words, having nothing worth while to say, they remain little else than clever jugglers of the brush. One wants to be a *master* of technique rather than to be the owner of a lot of it. Those who simply collect technique have at best only a second-hand lot.

Henri goes on to say that one never develops technique by just trying to develop technique. That is, an artist by studying and practicing line will never produce a landscape. Line comes as the artist endeavors to work out an idea. As he fails in getting his result, he changes his line, perfects it, but he perfects it as the result of the demands of his vision, not by studying line in terms of line itself. So with our students: the *goals* of our field must be set clearly in their consciousness or our instruction will never get either them or us very far.

In our time there is always a tremendous ferment of discussion about education in any form. We are never quite satisfied with what has been worked out, and rightly, because we expect infinite results. In the field of social work criticism of the training that we offer in our School of Social Work is always to the point, because we have, as compared to other professions, little by way of precedent. Before us lies a free opportunity unhampered and unguided, in the main, by tradition.

1. What do we hope to achieve? Surely, in our training we should develop *independent thinking*. Any one who has much to do with the teaching of



graduate students realizes how difficult it is to get them away from the tendency to quote the page and the chapter. We are all born to make our own individual contribution, and by every device in the power of the instructor this truth must be emphasized. We social workers owe a debt to the few independent souls in our group who, during the stress of the past few years, have stood clear of the 'herd-mind,' who, even at the expense of much misunderstanding, have refused to acclaim false economic, social, and political theories and who, on the other hand, have courageously stood against the fallacy of repressive measures as effective means of changing those ideas. Bishop Brent, in a telling letter in the 'Sunday Herald' under the date of September 27, 1925, says (referring to the recently published 'Bolshevik Bible'), 'To damn it, to discount its great influence in the Orient and in Europe, to ignore it, is mad folly. The one way to meet it is to build up something better, truer, and stronger.' Bishop Brent in writing that letter is thinking for himself.

2. *Interpretation.* Mrs. Chesley, Miss McLeod, and Mr. Bardwell (pp. 113, 127, 145) have given us an example of a kind of O. Henry power which should be cultivated by our students. No systematic exposition of the care of the aged would have sent us from that meeting last night with such a deep inner response to the needs of those for whom they are working. *It is the power of the novelist and the poet that we social workers need.* It is not enough to appreciate

the tragedy, the adventure, the heroism, and the victory in the lives of men and women whom we meet. *Social workers must be articulate.* Some, of course, are born with an extra gift of expression. But there are few who cannot cultivate the power if the will to do so is strong. Just think what is missed if we do not articulate our experience; because no group of people touches life as we do.

3. Most important also is *the students' relation to time*. An experience of self-mastery is involved in this. It is hard for us to face the fact that the grind of human progress is slow, that in our generation we cannot do all that we would. The revolutionist becomes maddened at this thought and smashes. There is, however, some comfort in the long perspective of history. In H. G. Wells's 'Outline of History' one sees that there have been many ups and down to civilization, but that each time civilization has gone through the descent, civilization has rested at a depth somewhat higher than in the period before. From this survey, moreover, one gets a sense that it is man's destiny to move forward and realizes the privilege of adding only that which can be added by the average man in the average generation. One feels the great process of creation and has the hope, the belief, the willingness not only to carry on, but to hand on. The appreciation of one's *relation to time* gives the social worker perspective, vision, and power.

4. No social worker will get far who does not appreciate *the philosophy of difference*. What a dull

existence this would be if we were all alike. How sound are those writers who would have one race dominate the world? Where would progress be if it were not for the differences of opinion?

5. It is essential to show students *the dangers of over-specialism*. One can be so loyal to one's specialty that one handicaps it more than helps it. If ever there were a field of action in which over-specialism defeats itself, that field is social work. So in our training, each line of effort must be related to every other line.

6. An able instructor will lead students to *test new theories by old experience and by the facts of human nature*, particularly when those theories appear to be panaceas. Not infrequently students are swept away by plans for reorganizing society that cannot bear such tests — for example, the equal division of property. Our students' attention might be called to a conversation in Galsworthy's 'The White Monkey.' Michael, who has married a rich wife, befriends a balloon seller. Michael, deeply touched with the balloon seller's poverty, says that the distribution of wealth is all wrong; that wealth should be equally divided. Quickly the balloon seller replies that if every man received in such a division only a few pounds and then realized that there was no more accumulated wealth from which he could draw to add to those few pounds, all hope would be gone and the world would go insane. Can our students read a passage like this in a novel and get

its significance? If they cannot, we as instructors have a task to do.

7. Finally, can we ourselves and our students *face eternity*, the great unknown phases of existence, without being driven into ourselves? Have we the faith that saves us from bewilderment in the presence of great mysteries? Unless we can face the great unknown factors of life, it is doubtful whether any social worker can make the contributions required of our field.

The sessions we have been attending have been shot through with the thought that a social worker must be thoroughly informed as to the interplay between the many lines of effort that affect his efforts. Mr. Weiss insisted that a social worker must not only carry forward a given plan for an individual in terms of that individual, but must also consider the relationships, ethical, social, economic, political, that build an individual into a contributing citizen through his family and his group life. We must try to build up a knowledge of the aims and latest findings in these lines as well as in law, medicine, and education. I have always considered social work as a profession that brought into synthesis other professions, because the social worker touches life not only with the single interest of health or education or recreation or labor, but with all these interests as they relate to individuals whom we know.

From another point of view social work may be considered as an avenue or approach through which

other professions become effective, because social workers are thrown into such a relation to daily existence that they can assist in applying the results of other professions to everyday action. Think what the social workers of America have done in raising the standards of living; in working out baby hygiene; in tuberculosis campaigns. If social workers are not informed as to the latest developments in allied fields, they may be foiled in bringing about the very results they are after. Therefore, our schools must try to give knowledge as to the latest developments in the many lines of effort with which social work is inter-related. There is a greater pressure put upon the social worker in this matter of being informed and of knowing sources of information than on any other professional worker I know about, because demands which are made are so varied and universal. One day last week, besides carrying the day's programme, a social worker saw seventeen people. The problems varied from a request to assist in paying rent to an interview at City Hall about an appropriation, and a request from a woman who wanted to know how to enter the diplomatic service of the United States.

Still more — about the relation to other professions. The social worker can hold the mirror of many a situation before the lawyer, doctor, scientist, in such a way as to bring out new opportunities. But to do so a social worker must know enough about the subdivisions of other professions to know where to make the connection. The evening schools of



America were brought into being, not through the efforts of educators, but of social workers. Vocational guidance did not come from industry, but was first experimented with at Civic Service House in the North End of Boston. In the training of social workers, then, it is fundamental, first, that the mind of the student be opened to the great truths of life and brought to a sense of personal obligation to develop those qualities of thought and of outlook that are necessary to a field which takes from life and must give back in terms of life. Second, the student must come to understand early the relation of social work as such to the entire range of effort that is affecting us all.

*Technique?* We should be sadly at fault if we did not pass on to the student the results of our years of experience. There is a way to approach people and a way not to approach them. There is a method by which one gets to know a community. A very fine plan has just been wrecked in Boston because the person who backed it did not know that city-wide action can only be brought about by carefully selecting the personnel of the original committee that is to put forward a project. Methods of finance and of organization and administration which have been worked out through the experience of our years of action must be passed along.

*Case work* is a universal method of analysis, which we have adapted to our needs. Our form of case work carries its own vocabulary and a certain method of



recording. The student should have the benefit of this. Organized social work has come out of a depth of experience which has tested it severely. It has not been easy for social work to find its path, and since we do not want to subject people to unnecessary experimentation, and since we do not wish to waste time in discovering what has been already discovered, we must teach the best methods we have evolved. It is not that we should not dwell on technique — we must; but the truth is that technique would not be technique, stark by itself. Technique becomes workable when it is clothed with an objective and so entwines itself with motive that the phrase 'technique and related work' becomes an absurdity because technique and related work cannot be separated.

In *field work* the student should be so drilled in the relation of technique to objectives that the steps to be taken sink into the background of one's consciousness, leaving a sense of mastery which gives the feeling of freedom of action. Technique, in other words, is never in the forefront of the mind of the skilled worker. We are not mechanics dealing with mechanical forces. The individual is many-faceted. In our field there is a constant adventure with new situations, with differing circumstances, so that we must be ready to throw technique to which we are accustomed aside; to develop new means as well as to follow old codes. In other words, social work is an art as well as a science.

Again turning to Henri:

Art when really understood is the province of every human being. It is simply doing things, anything, well. It is not an outside, extra thing. When the artist is alive in any person, whatever his kind of work may be, he becomes an inventive, searching, daring, self-expressing creature. He becomes interesting to other people. He disturbs, upsets, enlightens, and he opens ways for a better understanding. Where those who are not artists are trying to close the book, he opens it, shows there are still more pages possible.

The world would stagnate without him, and the world would be beautiful with him; for he is interesting to himself and he is interesting to others. He does not have to be a painter or a sculptor to be an artist. He can work in any medium. He simply has to find the gain in the work itself, not outside it.

Our goal is to make of social work a profession of professions, a great creative field of action by means of which the difficulties of life can be lessened and also by means of which we can build into the individual and into society new strength.

## OUR OBJECTIVES IN SOCIAL WORK AND SOME METHODS OF REACHING FOR THEM

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WHAT do I care most to see brought out, or built up, in students of social work? Brought out, or built up, not crammed in or tacked on. 'Students of social work' means every one of us, for we belong to a school from which there is no graduation. But I am thinking particularly of those 'beginning-students' who are to take our places — perhaps to walk in a promised land which we shall never even see. What do I care most to see brought out or built up in these young ones? It is this — *an ability to assay values*. I do not question their *desire*. I have every confidence in their *will* to do so. But I am concerned that we shall do our part to see that they have the *ability* to assay values.

Nothing, I believe, so impedes our progress in social work as our own inability to do this. Social work has not the healthy stimulus of competition as business has; it can always hide under the cloak of blessed 'endeavor.' There isn't enough survival of the fittest or non-survival of the unfit. The poorest workers can always find an admiring group who at least will say, 'Well, I don't exactly know what they

are doing, but I am sure they mean well.' I want to suggest three things a 'beginning-student' must learn before she can attain — not efficiency, but survival value.

First, How to face reality and to interpret it into healthy, growing life.

Second, How to use freedom — in thought, speech, and action.

Third, How to live loyalty to social work — the implication being, not that she serves social work, but that she is social work.

Then I want to suggest some definite methods by which we can help the beginning-worker to learn these lessons.

#### I. HOW TO FACE REALITY AND TO INTERPRET IT CONSTRUCTIVELY

Yesterday a thoughtful woman said to me, 'Do we social workers often fall into shallow moralizing — do we try to philosophize when we aren't able?' Thinking of myself (for after all that is all I can be sure about), I answered 'yes.' I think the reason is this; that we fail first to grasp the facts and then to fit our philosophy to the truth, because we use philosophy as an escape from reality.

There is no worker on earth who has a more grilling task than the social worker in the necessity for facing life. Wasn't it Emerson who said, 'But in the mud and scum of things, there's always, always something sings'? Well, maybe it does, but there are

songs and songs, and what songs the social worker must listen to! What a song of despair from the lips of the man who, though able to work, cannot find a job to feed his children! What a song in the agony of a prostitute dying of disease, or in the frenzy of men and women beating the wings of their spirits against prison doors! Hans Weiss brought it home to us in his exquisite paper (page 42) — the meanness of a civilization that can build a bank a block big to house its money, but can't find room for its children to grow in the sunshine. Of course I know there are a thousand gay and happy melodies. No one knows that better than I who spent seven years of my life in South Boston, the most lovable district of the city of Boston. But those don't flock into your mind when some lovely young thing looks at you with glowing face and says, 'I want to go into social work'; and when you look at her happy innocence it's all you can do not to say, 'Go straight home to your mother.'

What is it that keeps us from saying that? First of all, perhaps, we recognize that courage is an attribute of youth. Or perhaps it is the grimmer fact that, after all, these things are so sad that youth must begin to bear its share in the burdens of life and in solving its problems. But most convincing of all, it seems to me, is the knowledge which every experienced social worker has — that there is healing in the study and search for causes. Miss Dougherty's neighbor knew this when out of her day of sorrow

she could say, 'But after all it's interesting' (page 90). The physician knows it when he learns to look at a loathsome sore with the eyes of scientific interest and yet never fails in sympathy for the sufferer; when he learns to study causes and means of prevention side by side with his effort to relieve pain.

So the 'beginning-social-worker' needs to learn to face truth no matter how it hurts, to refuse to bear it with resignation or ask any one else to do so, to refuse to drug her pain by burying herself under the burden of detail without thought. She learns that the pain of reality is rightly borne only when reality is scientifically faced, when we ask, 'What is wrong? Why is it wrong? How can we cure? What are the lessons in prevention?'

## II. FREEDOM IN THOUGHT, IN ACTION AND IN SPEECH

It was in trying to think out my belief on this that I realized how easy it was to fall into shallow moralizing. In the first place, freedom is in itself a confusing idea — the very name is contradictory. One expects from it that freedom will be free, and yet what a price men pay to gain it! Then there doesn't seem to be enough of it to go around. Have you ever lived neighbor to a really free child? If you have you must realize that when he is through taking all he wants, there is very little left for you. Mr. Campbell voiced yesterday (see page 72) the criticism that public school education crushes the desire to be great. Yet we demand that it teach discipline and a certain



degree of conformity. With all our talk about enfranchising the individual, most of us are afraid of freedom — for some one else. What is freedom for me looks like license in you. I may be very free in telling a student her faults, but is it not insubordinate of her to tell me mine?

How can we teach enough conformity to give others a chance to be free without crushing out originality and creative desire? You see how I prove that my subject is beyond me. But out of my questioning one conviction grows — that this would be a better world in which to live if we knew enough to teach young people how to use freedom, and if we had the courage to face results.

Sometimes, when I am taking a holiday by having fun with my mind, I indulge in mischievous thoughts. Wouldn't it be fun if the questions the students asked of me could be broadcast from the Common! They come round-eyed with this and that bit of news. 'Miss Hardwick, do you realize so and so?' Then they say right out loud (because they don't know any better) what you and I only whisper. In one contact they have found out what you and I have known for years about low ideals and wretched performances which we allow to go on and on because we haven't the courage to speak the truth. Of course this holiday-thinking is sheerest nonsense on my part. To do good in speaking the truth one must speak as one having authority, and of course students do not have that. I get well paid for my mali-

cious imaginings by a sense of humiliation at the many times in which I literally do not dare to speak the truth because I do not know how to do it well. But I think there are ways in which we can help these young people to do better than we have done; to use freedom in thought, speech, and action and yet not jeopardize the things they seek to give. Some of these I want to talk of later.

### III. LOYALTY IN SOCIAL WORK

The worker must learn to make herself a living part of social work, to absorb its ideals and its methods until she can work as an artist works, sure in technique, free from self-consciousness, lost in the creation of things to be done. I think the outstandingly terrible experience of my life in social work was at a time when I found myself so self-conscious that I seemed to be outside my group and not able to get back. It came to me casually at first, as things do. A woman who attended my weekly case conference said, 'I do love to come to your conference.' Of course I purred. And then she shattered the glow of my self-complacency and my peace of mind for a long time by these words: 'I said to my husband just last week that my dinner never tastes so good as after conference when I realize how many people don't have a dinner like this. It makes me realize my blessings.'

My first feeling was disgust at her. Then crashing through my own satisfaction came the thought:

'What about yourself? What about your own happiness in your work? What about the zeal with which you fly to the rescue of those in need? How you do enjoy having a lot of unhappy people to help!' Now I suppose the psychiatric workers present know exactly what happened to me next. Very likely the simple truth is that I needed a vacation. But in any event, I became hag-ridden by this obsession. I became self-conscious and miserable. I used to go to meetings and look round at all of you social workers and think, '*He* doesn't look as if he'd feed on the poor.' '*She* doesn't look as if her happiness came from satisfaction at another's misery.'

A surprising number of people outside the field corroborated my jaundiced view. I found literature to prove that all altruism was a devastating egoism. When a trade-union leader directed his usual harangue at me, I found myself spinelessly acquiescing, which, incidentally, so surprised him that he said, 'Well, now, I don't know — I think you're probably all right'; and devoted several minutes to trying to put the sense of struggle back into me. But the nightmare came back to me only yesterday when Professor Hocking quoted, 'We live our way into our thinking rather than think our way into our living.' That was what had happened to me.

When I had finally reduced myself to a pulp, I was given the grace to see that that was, after all, exactly what I was and that it mattered nothing in the world that that was so. I had to forcibly turn myself back

to the work that my self-consciousness had hindered me from doing. I had to cease indulging in thoughts of self and think of some one else. And in the work of my district I found the healing that I needed. Looking back on this tangle of self-distrust, I now can see that it was wound about an illogicality. To love my job was not the same as loving the misery I wanted to help. I loved — as we all do — the opportunity to fight against what I hated, against the loneliness and bewilderment, the sickness, cruelty, and heedlessness which make havoc of so many lives. In that love there was nothing disgraceful.

But in early days when new experiences crowd upon the worker, it is all too easy to be obsessed by some such form of self-consciousness. It is a great lesson to let loyalty and understanding of ideal and method so grip you that you become, not a servant or a slave of social work, but the thing itself.

#### IV. LEARNING TO ASSAY VALUES

Now I want to touch on some practical ways in which you and I are responsible for helping beginning-students learn to assay values.

##### 1. *True presentation of the field of social work*

Miss Dougherty said (page 89), 'We sit down and study the play, and when we know the play we begin to study our parts.' So first of all there is our responsibility for the right presentation of the field of social work. It is easy enough to plan lectures and

to say to students, 'Now this is social work. We do it so and so.' But then the student goes out into the field to see for herself, and what does she see? That is our responsibility. While it is not impossible that out of these beginners there may come forth a savior in social work, most of them will be little better or worse than the work which they see us do. If they find that we say one thing in our lectures and do another thing in our performances, they'll very likely believe the thing they see us do. The part our students take in the play will be very much conditioned by the play as they see us act it.

2. *We must help the student to interpret her own life experiences and to control her life*

Our students bring to social work a wealth of human relationships. We are accustomed to speak of beginners as 'without experience.' As a matter of fact they have already a priceless equipment if they only knew how to use it. Many of them are the products of almost ideal home life. We must help them to carry the spirit of these family relationships, which they have taken as a matter of course, into their work with other homes. We send them to children's agencies to learn about children. To be sure, they may have small brothers of their own, but what can they know from them — they are only pests. We teach them about organized recreation and work them so hard that they lose the gift of play with which they came to us. We need to do better



case work with our students — to be more ingenious in devising ways whereby the student can evaluate herself and her experiences. A first step in this direction is helping the student to look upon her own problems in the same way that she looks upon those of her 'clients.' Early in the year we ask our students to outline what they feel they should know about a person in order to help him. How many are the details we feel we must know! Then we say, 'Now you are a case problem to a field guide. Take your outline and fill this in for her. Whenever you come to a question you wanted to ask some one else, but don't want to answer, think over your reasons for reticence. Reticence is a precious thing; very likely you are right in not wanting to confide in your field guide, but try to be clear of the reasons in your mind.' We have had some interesting results from this, not only in information given, but in information withheld. Later in the term last year several of the students asked leave to rewrite their statement, saying, 'We have grown in knowledge of what it is wise to say of ourselves and what it is wise to ask of others.'

Another experiment has consisted in advising students with 'personality difficulties' to seek psychiatric help. We are fortunate in having on our staff a wise and sane psychiatrist. Theoretically, and with our 'poor families,' we are all agreed on the need for frequent and extensive psychiatric examinations. But when it comes to ourselves, how many lessons we have learned! A simpler but equally



effective aid to self-evaluation has been made available to all the students through the coöperation of many of you. Two years ago we gave up asking for '*confidential* reports' from the field guides about our students. The understanding now is that the content of the field report is not confidential but will be interpreted to the student by me as director of field work. I do not read them verbatim, but I try to get across to the student the thought of the field guide. Reports are made under the headings 'strong and weak points' and a suggestive outline is given to the field guide. The result has been that students rarely come to me now to have their field reports read because the field guides take up the points with them direct. The students realize that the field guides are expert case workers and so while their own diagnoses are not always agreed to by the students, they do treat them thoughtfully. We need to work out more devices to help the student realize that the understanding of her own life and the control of herself is the first step to the understanding of others.

### 3. *We must help the student to acquire method*

I am not afraid of technique any more than I am afraid of home, clothes, food, or any of the things that go to make up my daily life. To be sure, I may be afraid sometimes that I'm not going to get all I want out of them or that I'm not very proud of what I acquire. But fear of their dominating or absorbing

me I have none. I have no fears that our beginning-students will become enslaved by technique. In the first place I do not yet feel there is any too much of it about. In the second place I believe that the practice of having students share in the everyday work of good social agencies rather than in an artificial practice field serves to keep technique always subordinate as a means to service.

We are peculiarly fortunate, I believe, in having for our students leaders who maintain the right balance between ideals in method and the practical performance of them. Reading, study, and group discussion are all necessary to discipline in technique; but these must be supplemented by planned participation under the direction of leaders who are not only masters of their own technique, but teachers as well.

This learning through action means not only drill in technique, but experience through the bearing of responsibility. It is just here that many older workers stand in the way of beginners. You know the sort of worker who, having gained his present position by the trial-and-error method, looks down from his height on the beginner and says, 'These young things — what do they think they are doing? I was working before they were born.' Now this kind of worker is suffering from an old-age complex. He may still have his hair and look fairly agile, but he's really suffering from jealousy of youth. It is true that youth does have strange and devious ways

of doing things. There was an old lady, whose eyes were dim with too much looking for trouble, who once saw some small neighbors busy at work in the yard with hammer and nails and much noise. She went to her door and said, 'You boys ought to be ashamed, tearing things to pieces like that. Your father works too hard to have you destroying his property so.' Three red little faces glared back at her until one of them found words. 'Why, Mrs. So and So,' he said, 'you don't understand. We're buildin' somepin.' It's often true with old folks that they don't know when young folks are 'buildin' somepin.'

Of course it is hard to trust our precious possessions in the hands of youth. We'd like them to learn first — then do. We say to them, 'You'd better study and think about walking. I wouldn't try to take any steps. You might fall down and hurt yourself or some one else. But when you've learned to walk, why, then it will be time to attempt it.' I have lived very close to the lives of my neighbors and I happen to know that a great many of them not only enjoy young visitors, but respect and follow them. And often if they could choose between the blunders of the very young and the routine callousness of the elders they would choose the former. We ask a great deal of our field guides when we urge that they give beginners responsibility without sacrificing those they seek to help. But the good field guide knows that this is essential to the growth of the student.

4. *To encourage our students to express their ideas*

May I suggest three practical ways of doing this? First, help the student to acquire something to express and give him the opportunity to do it. Second, putting a premium on creative thinking, and, third, creating the necessity for expression. It sounds very obvious to say that we should give the student an opportunity to express herself and yet how easy it is to be overhelpful — to snatch the very words from her mouth and say, 'Yes, yes. I know just what you mean. I've often felt that way myself.' When she stumbles haltingly in her attempt at self-expression, it is painful to be a good listener, but I could give you case-workers many illustrations of students who have told me of the help they have had from your patience and understanding. The same thing is true of 'creative thinking.' We all say we want it, but how often we insist on the student thinking our thoughts. How often we listen eagerly to see if she has our point when if she is let alone she will really evolve a point of her own. How easy it is to pass over her futile attempt at an original idea in the zeal to teach her our ways — or even perhaps to look shocked at the idea of a young person suggesting new thoughts. How many times, when she does bring forth a thought of her own, do we say, 'Oh, well, you are young. When you've been at this game as long as I have you'll realize originality doesn't pay. There's nothing new under the sun anyway.' I imagine most of us would feel pretty humble if we

could see before us all the times we had either wittingly or unwittingly smothered a youngster's infant thoughts. To put a premium on fresh thinking is a lovely phrase, but it's our responsibility to see that it is something more.

But I think of all aids to self-expression the one which I have seen work the greatest marvels is putting the student in the position where necessity drives her to expression. Time and again have I seen people who were dumb to the point of agony in casual conversation roused to the most expressive speech when some one needed them. I recall one student who came to me when I was a field guide. This young person was terrified when addressed in public. She would grow red and her chin would waggle, but no words came. I was on the point of writing to the School that she was absolutely inarticulate (and could therefore never be a social worker!) when one of my most 'difficult husbands,' whom she had visited the day before, stamped into the office. He was a brilliant and argumentative young Irishman who used his brilliancy and his arguments to very poor account.

'You can tell Miss So and So,' he said belligerently, naming my inarticulate student, 'that I went to work this morning. Just tell her so for me.' And then a sheepish grin came over his face and he added, 'My God, Miss Hardwick, that woman can talk!'

'Talk!' I gasped.



'You bet she can talk. Say, you know me, don't you? She out-talked me. And, my God, Miss Hardwick, that woman told the truth.'

Yes, I do believe that God does put words of truth into people's mouths when they need it most. And I think I don't worry so much about the person who is inarticulate with those of us who don't particularly need her.

#### 5. *Sharing the best we know*

In the last place, I believe the greatest responsibility any of us have in helping young people to weigh and test values is the sharing of whatever is best in our own life experience — beauty — work — religion — play.

We had in our family something which in some form or other all of you probably had in yours. In our family it was called *the middle chamber drawer*. It was the place where best things were kept. As I look back it astonishes me how many of the threads of my life were tied to the contents of the middle chamber drawer. First of all there was respect and reverence. The middle chamber drawer, as I remember it, was never locked, but though it was in the middle of a much-used chest in a much-used room, it was a place where you didn't pry — where you didn't go without your mother's consent. It seems to me as I look back on it quite a victory that the middle chamber drawer was safe from grubby little hands. One of the scandals of our childhood



that is still spoken of with horror was the time when one of us — egged on by a neighbor's child — took the things out of the drawer.

There were wonderful things in the middle chamber drawer — precious things and beautiful. A sandalwood fan, breathing faintly of the Orient — carved in a marvelous pattern and so fragile you must not put your clumsy little fingers on it. There were pieces of old lace, exquisitely dainty, and these had a utilitarian value, too, for when you couldn't have a new dress and you wanted one awfully, you got a scrap of it sewed into the neck of your old dress, and surely you could go anywhere knowing you had real lace in the neck of your frock. There was a brown curl cut from the head of the sister I never knew, and her beautiful, glowing Roman sash. You couldn't feel any one was sadly dead who owned that vivid, living thing. You knew it was a real Roman sash because it had splashes of black across its crimson and gold, and that made somber little ideas creep in and out your mind, but you couldn't quite catch them. But the thing I loved the best was a gold and crystal vial not much larger than a lead pencil. It was almost solid, but in the middle was a thread of liquid — attar of roses. You could take out the crystal stopper (because there was another beneath that) and sniff and wonder why it was so precious, where it came from, what it meant. And it wasn't until years after that the evanescent thoughts of a child's mind were made clear when I read

Essential oils are wrung;  
The attar from the rose  
Is not the gift of suns alone,  
It is the work of screws.

Beauty and love and reverence, things dimly understood but deeply felt, the middle chamber drawer is a symbol of the good and precious things of life. Each of us has some such treasure place — not for every one, but for some one — for dear things grow dearer by sharing. In our lives in social work each of us has gathered what seems to us essentially the best, and these are things our beginners need to share.

Miss Wright spoke of Dr. Walter Fernald (page 171). I never knew Dr. Fernald personally, but I knew him intimately as a leader whom I trusted. The beauty and sincerity of his life poured something into mine. And in return for that I must pass on to the students who will never see him the essence of his life. They must see the school at Waverley as he created it, the joyous home of children who needed protection and sympathy. They must see his mind at work studying his problems with that beautiful blend of science and human understanding. They must glow with respect for the trained brain that could humbly learn from the feeble-minded. Walter Fernald can never die. It is not to keep his spirit alive that is my concern, for he does that himself, but it is to see that our beginning-students shall share, through those of us who knew him, in a life that helped many to a better knowledge of values.

So if in my early growing years God let me know and work with Mrs. Joseph Lee and see that steadfastness and idealism that could steady a young worker through turbulent experiences, I must pass on to other beginners my faith in volunteer workers and all that they mean to the continuance of social work. As I look around this room I see many people about whom students have said to me, 'Miss So and So has helped me more than you can know. She shared her experiences with me'; or, 'I feel as if I understood social work better because Mr. So and So talked with me about his own life.' There is nothing a student more appreciates or that helps her more to get her own values straight than to know on what you, who have lived fuller and richer lives, set a value — to know what is precious to you in this life of social work.

One of the things that has interested me most in this conference is the little thread that runs in and out of almost every speech — a reaching for something: Mr. Lee's 'and then some'; beauty, some one else said. Well, perhaps beauty is as good a word as any. Something at least we all need — something we hunger for and of which we never get quite enough. Because it had the courage to reach for these things, this conference has done something to my sense of the values of social work — added to them, strengthened them, clarified them. I believe the greatest beauty of this conference lies in the attempt to share; for that is not an easy thing to do

when one feels inadequate of expression. It seems to me, too, a test of social workers that we have dared speak our innermost thoughts to each other. For the ability to do this depends, not on the courage of the speaker, but on the understanding response of the listener.

I have one more thing that I want to share with you because it expresses better than I ever could some of the idea we try to give our beginning-students. The words are Dr. Cabot's. I have taken them out of a longer paper, so that if they do not flow smoothly, that is my fault.

I see and read in this case-record the outlines of a social worker's creed —

A table of reticences, a sheaf of reverences, a technique of approach, a philosophy of giving and receiving.

I believe in the beauty of truth and the truth of beauty.

I believe that except when we fail to understand, except where we face mystery and disaster, the truthful record of any human life should show something lovable and therefore beautiful.

I believe that in successful social work the worker profits and enjoys often more than those for whom she works.

I believe that love and laughter are the precious privileges and the strong defenders of the social worker.

If we must give up the magnificent old word charity, we must keep its essence.

The business of the social worker is still charity in St. Paul's sense.

A sense of humor is not a luxury or an ornament, but a necessity for good social work; an essential balance wheel, an eliminator of foolishness. No other sort of intelligence

can be trusted to save us from little mistakes every day and from terrible disasters now and then.

Pauline charity, humor, and the discipline of suffering — these are prime qualifications through which the social worker earns the right to love, to laugh and to suffer with others.

But there is another and still rarer qualification — the capacity to appreciate and reverence another's religion. We train our ears and our eyes, we grow keen and sensitive to detect faint early signs of disease, hidden embryonic manifestations of sex feeling. But are there many who are as keen and sensitive to detect the subconscious and hidden signs of *religion*, to recognize it masquerading under as many and complex disguises as ever concealed any emotion? If we dug and searched half as hard for religion as we do for disease, for hereditary influences, or for 'conflicts,' I believe we should come to agree that the repression of the instinct for God does far more damage than all other repressions put together, because it is the cause and the root of most of them.

I said at the outset that a record of human life can rarely be true and accurate unless it shows beauty and something lovable. I end with the assertion that it must be superficial unless it touches the central spring of human desires — religion. For the chief desire of man (including social workers) is 'to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.'





## PART V

SUMMARY: WHAT IS IT THAT WE TRY TO  
GIVE OR TO ATTAIN IN SOCIAL WORK?



## CHRISTIAN CHARITY

BY RICHARD C. CABOT

*Professor of Clinical Medicine and Professor of Social Ethics  
Harvard University*

A HOSPITAL exists for a well-defined end: to restore health. Yet, when one realizes the strange means to that end accumulated under its roof, they seem so bewilderingly multifarious that one might well fall to doubting whether all these rivers and vessels seek the same sea. You can find in a hospital jars of oxygen gas, liquid air, static electricity, machines for producing ultra-violet light, for applying radiant heat, ice, carbonic-acid snow, huge magnets to pull steel particles out of the eye, rooms full of apparatus for applying the X-ray, that mysterious healing, revealing, and destructive radiant energy — in short, for applying to sick humanity most of the free elements and energies known to man.

Ranged on the apothecary's shelves and in the laboratories you can find colloidal gold, nitrate of silver, lead, mercury, iron, copper, platinum, tin, antimony, zinc, sodium, calcium, potassium, strontium, bromine, chlorine, iodine, manganese, and many other elements. You find ointments made of fossil fish, plaster made of Spanish flies, extracts of sheep's thyroid, and oil from the liver of a codfish. The bark of trees, the roots, seeds, and leaves of countless plants are there also.

But in a hospital you also find almost every trade and profession in motion. You find artists painting, musicians playing, priests praying, mechanics elaborating apparatus to aid the halt, the maimed, and the (nearly) blind, teachers of basketry, clay modeling, knitting and weaving, to employ and strengthen sick minds and hands, librarians offering books and pictures to occupy vacant thoughts, social workers practising the art of which I am now writing.

But all these energies, potencies, and apparatus, chemical, physical, biological, psychological, spiritual, are marshaled to one clear end — healing. In social work is our aim as clear? When we plan physical examinations and psychological tests, when we fill out face-sheets, visit institutions, test foster homes, and place children in them, when we plan financial, hygienic, recreational, educational, disciplinary measures, do we know what we are after as well as those who work in a hospital do? Is there any single aim which holds together the work of those who aid travelers, sailors, families, delinquents, cripples, inebriates, deserted wives, neglected children, homeless men, blind babies, demented old people, bewildered adolescents?

In the preceding pages of this book I find this question answered, 'Yes.' I find, moreover, that the answers of the group of friends who have written there do not contradict but supplement and illuminate each other. In this chapter, therefore, I shall try, as I did at the closing session of the Swampscott

Conference (November, 1925), to weave together the mutually reënforcing strands of insight which have come to me from those whose words precede my own, while I add a thread or two which seem also to belong there.

## I

Suffering, misery-that-enslaves, is the first, though not the only, enemy against whom we campaign; not all suffering, but only that which enslaves. The mile-runner at the three-quarter point is suffering acutely in body and often in mind also. But he wants no aid and would never think of himself as entangled. He is freely carrying out his own will and, if he is in the lead, would not change his lot for any other's. Freedom, therefore, and the free chance to live his life with whatever suffering that life necessarily entails, *but no more*, is what we want to attain through social work. When sickness, poverty, ignorance, delinquency, civil-war-in-the-mind, are holding a person bound hand and foot, then the social worker wants to see him freed. But because it is his freedom that we want and because relief of suffering may enslave him afresh by sapping his energies in dependence, it is always in our minds that relief by money like relief by morphine may give ease, but not freedom, and so may increase the trouble that we wish to cure.

Suffering relieved for freedom's sake, in freedom's name, is then our goal. Until we get the cinder out

of a man's eye, as Mr. Lee said (page 53), he can give his mind to nothing else, and though the cinder seems a trifle it may block all his best energies. He cannot earn, or learn, or enjoy till this obstacle is removed. The enfranchisement of human souls and bodies, then, seems to be the goal of social work and is so, provided we know what enfranchisement implies. For children, as Mrs. Baylor said, freedom often implies some way of escape from torturing fears, from haunting sorrows, obsessive sexual imagery, enslaving habits, explosive energies, distracting or alluring environment, gang-control. For adults these enemies may be just as formidable. Even in the aged we may have to fight all the children's foes. We focus our attention on these internal traitors when we find them in the delinquent or unhappy child, but think less of them when we try to help the grown man or the aged woman. Then the problems of support, the relief of illness, are oftener in the foreground, though these are essential parts of any sound plan of help at any age. But we are less hopeful about the delinquencies and mental conflicts of old age. Rightly? Not always. The more skillful workers with old people sometimes bring them more happiness by helping to modify their point of view, by enriching their mental furniture and nourishing their ambitions, than by material relief — essential though that is. My point is that the essential benefits for which we aim in social work are the same in childhood, in manhood, and in old age: *work* that



satisfies some ambition is necessary for the child and for the aged as well as for the wage-earner. *Play* that gives a glimpse of noble *beauty* comes into Miss McLeod's provision for the old people in her care (page 142) as well as into Mr. Weiss's drive for a redeemed city environment for children (page 39), and into Miss Dougherty's plan for the enrichment of a whole neighborhood's life (page 87). Old people consciously crave *affection* more than many children do, but do they *need* it more? None of the seven ages of man is alive without love given and received. At no period, in no adventure, are we content with work, play, and love unless we feel their connection with universal laws, with some plan of the world that speaks to us and answers to our effort. This we naturally call God.

## II

I am here assuming that the fundamental human desires are essentially alike in all nations, in all centuries, for richer, for poorer, for better, for worse, in sickness and in health. To set these fundamental desires free is the task, not only of the social worker, but of the statesman, the teacher, the doctor, and the minister of religion. But *the sort of trouble* in which people call for the social worker's help distinguishes his task from others. Just how one can best phrase these fundamental desires, how many one distinguishes and how far they are conceived to head up toward a central Master Desire, are mat-

ters that can be only briefly touched on here. Mr. Smith's list (page 98):

Self-support (with one's family)  
 Self-expression  
 Self-respect  
 Respect of others  
 Justice

is a workable and useful one. Professor Thomas's choice of words gives him:

Adventure  
 Security  
 Recognition  
 Response

To me it seems that the phrases of both lists express different forms of one fundamental desire, to be 'in it,' to find one's place and do one's part, and thereby to be somebody. We feel ourselves outside things and people. We want to get in. Self-support, self-expression, self-respect and others' respect prove to us that we are in the game, have a speaking part in the world's drama. Justice and security are evidence (like the respect of others and like recognition and response) that we have taken and hold a place in the social structure. Adventure and self-expression are ways of finding ourselves as well as our chance to serve. I was delighted with the wording which Mr. Campbell (page 69) gave to the delinquent boy's ambition: 'The most insistent of all wants is this: "I want to be of some account in the

world," "I want to be great." Professor Hocking, in the address here only reproduced in part, also stressed the vastness of the ordinary man's desires — his desire not primarily to receive, but to give generously and without stint. As we scan the more prosaic and moderate wants ordinarily set down as fundamental to humanity, what Mr. Campbell and Professor Hocking have said may well be remembered.

As already suggested, I do not take any of these lists very seriously. That there are fundamental human desires, so far alike in all men that our likenesses are deeper than our differences, I firmly believe. So far as I see, any serious attempt to understand others, to coöperate with them, and to help them must be based on such a belief, though the identities which we depend on to unite us with our fellows are not always stated in the same way. It is not essential to agree about the precise formulation of the linking qualities. But it is essential, I think, to be aware of their center, the core from which they branch. I have already suggested one set of phrases for this central or Master Desire. Another set, more conventional and high-sounding (and so repelling many, though their bark is worse than their bite) receive the rather formidable names of the good, the true, and the beautiful. But are they so unreal in men as we know them?

Curiosity about the unknown which may issue in a scholarly search for scientific and philosophic

truth is, I think, one phase of that *burrowing* impulse which wants to get inside the world and the mind to see how they work.

The attraction to what is bright, pretty, fascinating, beautiful, is our response to a welcoming voice which speaks to us here and there in the universe and says to us through beauty, '*Come in.*'

Finally, the desire for virtue itself is the striving of a man to be a man and not a mass of conflicting impulses, so to organize his desires around a central purpose or ideal that he is at home in himself, and in the world not a helpless onlooker or rebel in a world which he does not understand.

So by organizing lists like Mr. Smith's and Professor Thomas's around one Master Desire one can reissue the time-honored ideals of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty as chapters in the book of that primal and central Desire.

Any one can add terms to any such list, or fuse several into one. No list is complete; all lists contain overlapping terms. But some such mapping of the deepest interests and aspirations of mankind is essential to social work because it is these desires, and not *all* desires, that social work (like ethics, religion, politics, education, jurisprudence) wants to see satisfied.

I have tried to describe one way in which a particular set of phrases intended to map the springs and rivers of human desire can be united (as a nor-

mal man is united) about a central desire — the desire to be 'in it,' in the life of the world. I find myself led to a similar unification of human desires by another path also. Take the rather popular list as Mr. Smith (page 98) has given it:

Self-respect  
Respect for others  
Self-support  
Self-expression  
Justice

'*Self-support*' is a good workable phrase if you do not examine it closely. But of course no creature was ever self-supporting. He depends on the physical universe and on his fellow beings in every moment of his life. What we mean by a self-supporting man is one who has found his place in relation to permanent and beneficent sources of support, physiological, economic, spiritual: honest work rather than thieving, work whereto he contributes his part instead of being supported in idleness. One's 'self-support' means support by contact with some relatively steady and honest forces of the universe with which one actually coöperates.

'*Self-respect*': Can any one honestly respect himself with all his weaknesses and borrowings, his sins and stupidities, as he intimately knows them? I doubt it. I think one means respect for the creature one was meant to be, and aspires to be, respect for the specifications on which one was built, the maker's plan.

*'Self-expression'*: No one wants to express all of himself. We have in mind a selection among our desires, our ideas, and our feelings, when we speak of self-expression. Some are cheap, self-contradictory and mean. What we want to express (and to respect) is the fundamental plan of our make-up — again the maker's plan — our part in the world. It is for this that we want respect from others. We can ask others to respect only what we can respect ourselves — our ideals, what we are meant to be.

*'Justice'* — one's deserts, to get what one is worth. Who knows what he is worth or what he deserves, except that if and in so far as there is a plan of the world, Justice would put him where he belongs in that plan.

So, all these desires when pushed to their essential meaning seem to me to express the same Master Desire to find and take one's place in a world order, to do the will of God. Obviously there are countless other desires. As I see it, they are to be considered good, bad, or indifferent, not in themselves, but only because of their place in relation to the fundamentals. Food, sleep, sex, notoriety, cleverness, domination, revenge, admiration, are sample objects of the ordinary human desires which we want to see satisfied only when transformed or subordinated, only when they become useful, sometimes almost unrecognizable factors in the tissue of an active and happy existence organized about the Master Desire. That is what we want for others and for ourselves.



One great advantage of stating the social worker's goal in terms of a fundamental desire which we want to see satisfied, while the more superficial or formless impulses are subordinated, is that we have then an answer to puzzling questions about 'welfare,' 'civilization,' 'healthy life,' 'normal life,' 'goodness,' 'morality,' 'socialized aims,' and many other vague phrases which appear in our conference addresses and in our annual reports. For example: a family welfare society aims to promote 'good' family life. But what do we mean by 'good'? A reform school for boys wants 'so to deal with our lads that they will make the world a little better because they have lived in it.' But there are many standards of good family life and of better worlds. As I see it, we are oriented and ready for effective work only if we know that by a good family life or a good world we mean one in which the fundamental human desires get relatively free scope and dominate the other desires.

*Progress* (which might mean motion in *any* direction, toward *any* goal good or bad, since the word only means 'going forward') should, I think, be recognized whenever and wherever we see a better realization of what men most deeply and heartily desire, and a better subordination of chance whims and 'urges.'

*Normal life* — which strictly means the average life or the commonest type of existence — can thus be given an ethical rather than a statistical meaning.

'*Healthy*' *mental life* — which, so far as I know, is compatible with every known vice and crime — can also be made to mean something more than the absence of psychoses and psychoneuroses. So with all the other words pushed into circulation recently by those who are afraid of the old words 'good' and 'bad' and hope to find something more scientific, less tinged with praise and blame. If we define 'morality' as the organization of all a person's desires around his Master Desire, we escape the reproach of censoriousness and the deadness of convention. A person does wrong when he violates, not my standards or the world's customs, but his own ideals. He is fooling himself.

### III

But when we relieve suffering for freedom's sake so that men's enfranchised desires may be fundamentally organized and increasingly satisfied, we do not forget that almost any one's fundamental desires naturally and necessarily involve other people. Not only by right but by nature we are born members one of another, born (as several of the earlier chapters of this book say) into relationships to family, to industry, to the State, and to God — which we escape only by blighting our own natures. The social worker's goal therefore, is *the relief of misery and unhappiness so that people's enfranchised and organized desires can find their expression in the social relationships which are part of their natural out-*

*let.* In fact, however, the social worker's days are filled with problems arising because people don't know their own fundamental desires, are derailed from the track they want (at bottom) to follow, and are plunging destructively about among the delicate structures of family life, industrial life, and civic organization. They desert their wives and abuse their children; they lie and steal; they pervert and desecrate the powers by which life is passed on to future generations; they befuddle themselves with liquor and drugs. They abuse their power over the lives of others; they stir up social bitterness and class hate. In each of these disasters *some* desire is satisfied. But it is the social worker's task so far as possible to plan *constructive educational experiences* (see pages 84, 88, 105) which reveal people to themselves; reveal, that is, what they most deeply and permanently want. Such 'constructive educational experiences' are, for example, the life of a delinquent child in a well-chosen foster family. It should be literally a new experience to him and one which reveals to him a type of existence much more satisfactory to him than any he has known before. So in a factory the institution of a works committee or a joint conference of employers and employed is intended, not only to keep the peace in industry, but to educate all the members into a deeper appreciation of their common interests and of the satisfaction of working, not selfishly or altruistically, but for the common good.

All good friendships such as Mr. Weiss aims to form with boys put on probation, or such friendship as Miss Dougherty builds in her settlement group (page 87), and Mr. Bardwell in the almshouses and Miss Hardwick with her pupils, are constructive educational experiences. The social worker's art here is so to plan that people shall find out for themselves (and not be told) what opportunities for greater happiness and deeper self-expression are available at their own doors and in the course of their ordinary routine. Miss Hardwick's pupils in the School for Social Work are led to discover themselves their own strengths and weaknesses in the very constructive experience of learning 'case work.' Miss Dougherty's neighbors discover their own unsuspected interest in the community life around them. Mr. Weiss's boys discover with him the delight of clean recreation, of machinery, of friendship.

Essential in all this part of the social worker's plan is that some shall be led to find out for themselves independently and at first hand facts which reveal to them their own fundamental desires — hitherto overlaid, undeveloped, or perverted.

#### IV

But this is not enough. Experiences do not interpret themselves, do not teach all their own lesson. We see only what we are ready to see, sensitized to perceive. We find out what we are seeing or have seen only when it is interpreted to us. Miss Dough-

erty's neighbors were enlightened by their experience, but afterwards helped to understand their experience in the light of earlier talks, of ideas developed in the course of neighborhood 'gossip.' 'You couldn't teach it to me. I was too contented. It took life to teach it — or death you might say' (page 93). What that experience taught was what she had previously been 'sensitized' to learn by the interpretations, the philosophy of life which the settlement people had shared with her. Mrs. Baylor (page 17) urges that social workers shall not only know the people they work with, but shall *be known by them*, shall share, in other words, the best of their own beliefs and ideals. Professor Hocking reminds us that many delinquents rebel against society because they are 'unconvinced.' To these we must try to pass over by 'osmosis' the 'philosophy of the heart,' the 'sources of our own happiness.' Mrs. Chesley (page 119) found that it would not do to avoid all attempt to share our interpretations of the world, or to leave that all to the Church. 'Ought not social workers to have as a bottom plank in case-work some philosophy of life, . . . some fundamental attitude toward life underlying all their religions and creeds' — the outlook that enables people 'to live through hard conditions, not as martyrs, but as conquerors. . . . To say that we should meet the challenge of life as a great adventure has become hackneyed, but it is one way forward.' All the latter pages of Mrs. Chesley's paper illustrate the business of the social



worker as an interpreter of our common experience.

Miss Hardwick sees the same object attained by the proper 'assaying of values.' She urges teachers to share with students of social work the best that they know — 'Share whatever is best in your own life experience — beauty, work, religion, play.' She would say, I am sure, that we should share our visions and values not only with students, but with all with whom we work and through this should help them to find their own interpretations, their own philosophy or religion.

# V

The safe and healing quality of this advice is due, I think, to the fact that it urges us to *pass on* to those we try to help *something better and stronger than ourselves*. The physician is always trying to do this, to focus on the healing of his patient the forces which he is powerless to create, but is trained in some measure to direct. Through directions as to diet, sleep, exercise, sunlight, climate, through chemical and biological borrowings from animals, plants, and inanimate nature, he directs a stream of healing energy upon disease as the fireman directs a stream of water upon a fire. So, as I see it, the social worker, in planning constructive experiences or in sharing her philosophy and her vision, her cherished values and her enthusiasms, is directing a stream of vital energies which she never could make, but may be skillful or fortunate enough to mobilize.



They may be rejected or ignored. She can but lead the horse to water or convey the water to the horse. She never can make him drink. But if she brings the water in the name of Christ, in the spirit of Christian love, then even if the water is useless the effort itself may be healing. There are many things we can bring greater than our patched and puny selves: the physical and medical aid, the economic rehabilitation, the foster family, the stimulus of responsibility, the lure of spiritual adventure, the spirit of community service, the sharing of our visions, the sources of our happiness. About all these there is this to be said: *the way in which we make our advances* and offer our aid is as important as the aid itself. If the aid itself fails (as so often it does) we can count on only one final possibility of success: the effort, the intention itself, may be acceptable if it is the intention of Christian love. So often I have made utter shipwreck of my medical or psychological efforts and yet seen something beautiful born out of the failure, because without any merit or skill of mine the spirit of my fruitless endeavor was conveyed to the patient. I will not give up the greatest word in our language — charity — which speaks when all our work (social or solitary) is vain and is greater than its success. I think our gifts, our constructive and educational efforts, our attempts at enfranchisement, may be wrong even when they seem to us right, may at any time be doing harm when they seem to us most successful. The one thing that we

can be sure is right is the spirit which they express. That spirit, like the forces which it tries to direct, is greater than we. We don't make Christian charity. It is a gift which we bring. But it is ours to decide whether we shall have it to bring, to pass on as a reflection of our own gratitude to God and our delight in the children of his creation. Friendship we cannot give to all. Love we are commanded to give to all, friends and enemies both, and what we are commanded to do we can do. I have tried elsewhere<sup>1</sup> to describe how gratitude to the source of our lives builds itself up insensibly, cumulatively, with every blessing that we receive from the beauties of earth, sky, from the love of parents and friends, from the treasures of books, art, philosophy, science, sport, humor, and religion — till gratitude to the source of life becomes love of the lives which it creates and must be paid if we are not to be liars and monsters of ingratitude, paid in deeds as well as in feelings, not only in the love of men, but in the passion for reform, the building of Jerusalem.

The goal of social work is the feeding of the fundamental (and fundamentally social) human desires by the alleviation of misery, the reform of environment (material and especially spiritual), by the planning and the interpretation of constructive educational experiences, thus revealing God through Christian charity.

<sup>1</sup> *Social Work*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1919, Chapter IX.





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## RICHARD C. CABOT

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IN medical circles, Dr. Cabot is known as one of America's most brilliant physicians; by social workers he is regarded as the pioneer and foremost figure in the new science of medical social service; and among the general public he is celebrated as the author of 'What Men Live By,' one of the most successful and illuminating of American books on the art of life; and of other notable works.

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